1530

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASVATI MAHAL

THE

LIFE

OF

DAVID HUME, Esq.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

FROM THE

INVASION OF JULIUS CÆSAR

TO

The REVOLUTION in 1688.

In EIGHT VOLUMES, illustrated with Plates.

By DAVID HUME, Esq.

A NEW EDITION, with the AUTHOR's last CORRECTIONS and IMPROVEMENTS.

To which is prefixed,

A short ACCOUNT of his LIFE, written by Himself.

VOL. I.

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MY OWN

LIFE.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

IT is difficult for a man to ſpeak long of himſelf without vanity; therefore I ſhall be ſhort. It may be thought an inſtance of vanity that I pretend at all to write my life; but this Narrative ſhall contain little more than the Hiſtory of my Writings; as, indeed, almoſt all my life has been ſpent in literary purſuits and occupations. The firſt ſucceſs of moſt of my writings was not ſuch as to be an object of vanity.

I WAS born the 26th of April 1711, old ſtyle, at Edinburgh. I was of a good family, both by father and mother: My father's family is a branch of the Earl of Home's, or Hume's; and my anceſtors had been proprietors of the eſtate which my brother poſſeſſes for ſeveral generations. My mother was daughter of Sir David Falconer, Preſident of the College of Juſtice: The title of Lord Halkerton came by ſucceſſion to her brother.

MY family, however, was not rich, and being myſelf a younger brother, my patrimony, according to the mode of my country, was of courſe very ſlender.

My father, who paſſed for a man of parts, died when I was an infant, leaving me with an elder brother and a ſiſter, under the care of our mother, a woman of ſingular merit, who, though young and handſome, devoted herſelf entirely to the rearing and educating of her children. I paſſed through the ordinary courſe of education with ſucceſs, and was ſeized very early with a paſſion for literature, which has been the ruling paſſion of my life, and the great ſource of my enjoyments. My ſtudious diſpoſition, my ſobriety, and my induſtry, gave my family a notion that the law was a proper profeſſion for me; but I found an unſurmountable averſion to every thing but the purſuits of philoſophy and general learning; and while they fancied I was poring upon Voet and Vinnius, Cicero and Virgil were the authors which I was ſecretly devouring.

My very ſlender fortune, however, being unſuitable to this plan of life, and my health being a little broken by my ardent application, I was tempted, or rather forced, to make a very feeble trial for entering into a more active ſcene of life. In 1734 I went to Briſtol, with ſome recommendations to eminent merchants; but in a few months found that ſcene totally unſuitable to me. I went over to France with a view of proſecuting my ſtudies in a country retreat; and I there laid that plan of life which I have ſteadily and ſucceſsfully purſued. I reſolved to make a very rigid frugality ſupply my deficiency of fortune, to maintain unimpaired my independency, and to regard every object as contemptible, except the improvement of my talents in literature.

During my retreat in France, firſt at Rheims, but chiefly at La Fleche, in Anjou, I compoſed my

my *Treatise of Human Nature*. After passing three years very agreeably in that country, I came over to London in 1737. In the end of 1738, I published my Treatise, and immediately went down to my mother and my brother, who lived at his country-house, and was employed himself very judiciously and successfully in the improvement of his fortune.

NEVER literary attempt was more unfortunate than my Treatise of Human Nature. It fell *dead-born from the press*, without reaching such distinction as even to excite a murmur among the zealots. But being naturally of a cheerful and sanguine temper, I very soon recovered the blow, and prosecuted with great ardour my studies in the country. In 1742 I printed at Edinburgh the first part of my Essays: The work was favourably received, and soon made me entirely forget my former disappointment. I continued with my mother and brother in the country, and in that time recovered the knowledge of the Greek language, which I had too much neglected in my early youth.

IN 1745 I received a letter from the Marquis of Annandale, inviting me to come and live with him in England; I found also, that the friends and family of that young nobleman were desirous of putting him under my care and direction, for the state of his mind and health required it.—I lived with him a twelvemonth. My appointments during that time made a considerable accession to my small fortune. I then received an invitation from General St. Clair to attend him as a secretary to his expedition, which was at first meant against Canada, but ended in an incursion on the coast of France. Next year, to wit, 1747, I received an invitation from the General to

attend him in the ſame ſtation in his military embaſſy to the courts of Vienna and Turin. I then wore the uniform of an officer, and was introduced at theſe courts as aid-de-camp to the General, along with Sir Harry Erſkine and Captain Grant, now General Grant. Theſe two years were almoſt the only interruptions which my ſtudies have received during the courſe of my life: I paſſed them agreeably, and in good company; and my appointments, with my frugality, had made me reach a fortune, which I called independent, though moſt of my friends were inclined to ſmile when I ſaid ſo: In ſhort, I was now maſter of near a thouſand pounds.

I HAD always entertained a notion, that my want of ſucceſs in publiſhing the Treatiſe of Human Nature, had proceeded more from the manner than the matter, and that I had been guilty of a very uſual indiſcretion, in going to the preſs too early. I therefore caſt the firſt part of that work anew in the Enquiry concerning Human Underſtanding, which was publiſhed while I was at Turin. But this piece was at firſt little more ſucceſsful than the Treatiſe of Human Nature. On my return from Italy, I had the mortification to find all England in a ferment, on account of Dr. Middleton's Free Enquiry, while my performance was entirely overlooked and neglected. A new edition, which had been publiſhed at London, of my Eſſays, moral and political, met not with a much better reception.

SUCH is the force of natural temper, that theſe diſappointments made little or no impreſſion on me. I went down in 1749, and lived two years with my brother at his country-houſe, for my mother was now dead. I there compoſed the ſecond part of my

Eſſay, which I called Political Diſcourſes, and alſo my Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals, which is another part of my Treatiſe that I caſt anew. Meanwhile my bookſeller, A. Millar, informed me that my former publications (all but the unfortunate Treatiſe) were beginning to be the ſubject of converſation; that the ſale of them was gradually increaſing, and that new editions were demanded. Anſwers by Reverends and Right Reverends came out two or three in a year; and I found, by Dr. Warburton's railing, that the books were beginning to be eſteemed in good company. However, I had a fixed reſolution, which I inflexibly maintained, never to reply to any body; and not being very iraſcible in my temper, I have eaſily kept myſelf clear of all literary ſquabbles. Theſe ſymptoms of a riſing reputation gave me encouragement, as I was ever more diſpoſed to ſee the favourable than unfavourable ſide of things; a turn of mind which it is more happy to poſſeſs, than to be born to an eſtate of ten thouſand a-year.

In 1751, I removed from the country to the town, the true ſcene for a man of letters. In 1752 were publiſhed at Edinburgh, where I then lived, my Political Diſcourſes, the only work of mine that was ſucceſsful on the firſt publication. It was well received abroad and at home. In the ſame year was publiſhed at London, my Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals; which, in my own opinion (who ought not to judge on that ſubject), is of all my writings, hiſtorical, philoſophical, or literary, incomparably the beſt. It came unnoticed and unobſerved into the world.

In

In 1752 the Faculty of Advocates chose me their Librarian, an office from which I received little or no emolument, but which gave me the command of a large library. I then formed the plan of writing the History of England; but being frightened with the notion of continuing a narrative through a period of 1700 years, I commenced with the accession of the house of Stuart, an epoch when I thought the misrepresentations of faction began chiefly to take place. I was, I own, sanguine in my expectations of the success of this work. I thought that I was the only historian that had at once neglected present power, interest, and authority, and the cry of popular prejudices; and as the subject was suited to every capacity, I expected proportional applause. But miserable was my disappointment: I was assailed by one cry of reproach, disapprobation, and even detestation; English, Scotch, and Irish, Whig and Tory, churchman and sectary, freethinker and religionist, patriot and courtier, united in their rage against the man who had presumed to shed a generous tear for the fate of Charles I. and the earl of Strafford; and after the first ebullitions of their fury were over, what was still more mortifying, the book seemed to sink into oblivion. Mr. Millar told me, that in a twelvemonth he sold only forty-five copies of it. I scarcely, indeed, heard of one man in the three kingdoms, considerable for rank or letters, that could endure the book. I must only except the primate of England, Dr. Herring, and the primate of Ireland, Dr. Stone, which seem two odd exceptions. These dignified prelates separately sent me messages not to be discouraged.

I WAS,

I was, however, I confefs, difcouraged; and had not the war at that time been breaking out between France and England, I had certainly retired to fome provincial town of the former kingdom, have changed my name, and never more have returned to my native country. But as this fcheme was not now practicable, and the fubfequent volume was confiderably advanced, I refolved to pick up courage and to perfevere.

In this interval, I publifhed at London my Natural Hiftory of Religion, along with fome other fmall pieces: Its public entry was rather obfcure, except only that Dr. Hurd wrote a pamphlet againft it, with all the illiberal petulance, arrogance, and fcurrility, which diftinguifh the Warburtonian fchool. This pamphlet gave me fome confolation for the otherwife indifferent reception of my performance.

In 1756, two years after the fall of the firft volume, was publifhed the fecond volume of my Hiftory, containing the period from the death of Charles I. till the Revolution. This performance happened to give lefs difpleafure to the Whigs, and was better received. It not only rofe itfelf, but helped to buoy up its unfortunate brother.

But though I had been taught by experience, that the Whig party were in poffeffion of beftowing all places, both in the ftate and in literature, I was fo little inclined to yield to their fenfelefs clamour, that in above a hundred alterations, which farther ftudy, reading, or recollection engaged me to make in the reigns of the two firft Stuarts, I have made all of them invariably to the Tory fide. It is ridiculous to confider the Englifh conftitution before that period as a regular plan of liberty.

In

In 1759 I publiſhed my Hiſtory of the Houſe of Tudor. The clamour againſt this performance was almoſt equal to that againſt the Hiſtory of the two firſt Stuarts. The reign of Elizabeth was particularly obnoxious. But I was now callous againſt the impreſſions of public folly, and continued very peaceably and contentedly in my retreat at Edinburgh, to finiſh, in two volumes, the more early part of the Engliſh Hiſtory, which I gave to the public in 1761, with tolerable, and but tolerable, ſucceſs.

But notwithſtanding this variety of winds and ſeaſons to which my writings had been expoſed, they had ſtill been making ſuch advances, that the copy-money given me by the bookſellers much exceeded any thing formerly known in England; I was become not only independent, but opulent. I retired to my native country of Scotland, determined never more to ſet my foot out of it; and retaining the ſatiſfaction of never having preferred a requeſt to one great man, or even making advances of friendſhip to any of them. As I was now turned of fifty, I thought of paſſing all the reſt of my life in this philoſophical manner, when I received, in 1763, an invitation from the earl of Hertford, with whom I was not in the leaſt acquainted, to attend him on his embaſſy to Paris, with a near proſpect of being appointed ſecretary to the embaſſy; and, in the meanwhile, of performing the functions of that office. This offer, however inviting, I at firſt declined, both becauſe I was reluctant to begin connections with the great, and becauſe I was afraid that the civilities and gay company of Paris would prove diſagreeable to a perſon of my age and humour: But on his Lordſhip's repeating the invitation, I accepted of it. I have

every

every reaſon, both of pleaſure and intereſt, to think myſelf happy in my connexions with that nobleman, as well as afterwards with his brother General Conway.

THOSE who have not ſeen the ſtrange effects of modes, will never imagine the reception I met with at Paris, from men and women of all ranks and ſtations. The more I reſiled from their exceſſive civilities, the more I was loaded with them. There is, however, a real ſatisfaction in living at Paris, from the great number of ſenſible, knowing, and polite company with which that city abounds above all places in the univerſe. I thought once of ſettling there for life.

I WAS appointed ſecretary to the embaſſy; and, in ſummer 1765, Lord Hertford left me, being appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. I was *Chargé d'Affaires* till the arrival of the Duke of Richmond, towards the end of the year. In the beginning of 1766, I left Paris, and next ſummer went to Edinburgh, with the ſame view as formerly, of burying myſelf in a philoſophical retreat. I returned to that place, not richer, but with much more money, and a much larger income, by means of Lord Hertford's friendſhip, than I left it; and I was deſirous of trying what ſuperfluity could produce, as I had formerly made an experiment of a competency. But in 1767 I received from Mr. Conway an invitation to be Under-ſecretary; and this invitation, both the character of the perſon, and my connexions with Lord Hertford, prevented me from declining. I returned to Edinburgh in 1769, very opulent (for I poſſeſſed a revenue of 1000l. a-year), healthy, and though ſomewhat ſtricken in years, with the proſpect of enjoying long

long my eaſe, and of ſeeing the increaſe of my reputation.

IN ſpring 1775 I was ſtruck with a diſorder in my bowels, which at firſt gave me no alarm, but has ſince, as I apprehend it, become mortal and incurable. I now reckon upon a ſpeedy diſſolution. I have ſuffered very little pain from my diſorder; and what is more ſtrange, have, notwithſtanding the great decline of my perſon, never ſuffered a moment's abatement of my ſpirits; inſomuch, that were I to name a period of my life which I ſhould moſt chooſe to paſs over again, I might be tempted to point to this later period. I poſſeſs the ſame ardour as ever in ſtudy, and the ſame gaiety in company. I conſider, beſides, that a man of ſixty-five, by dying, cuts off only a few years of infirmities; and though I ſee many ſymptoms of my literary reputation's breaking out at laſt with additional luſtre, I knew that I could have but few years to enjoy it. It is difficult to be more detached from life than I am at preſent.

To conclude hiſtorically with my own character. I am, or rather was (for that is the ſtyle I muſt now uſe in ſpeaking of myſelf, which emboldens me the more to ſpeak my ſentiments); I was, I ſay, a man of mild diſpoſition, of command of temper, of an open, ſocial, and cheerful humour, capable of attachment, but little ſuſceptible of enmity, and of great moderation in all my paſſions. Even my love of literary fame, my ruling paſſion, never ſoured my temper, notwithſtanding my frequent diſappointments. My company was not unacceptable to the young and careleſs, as well as to the ſtudious and literary; and as I took a particular pleaſure in the company of modeſt women, I had no reaſon to be

 diſpleaſed

displeased with the reception I met with from them. In a word, though most men, anywise eminent, have found reason to complain of calumny, I never was touched, or even attacked, by her baleful tooth; and though I wantonly exposed myself to the rage of both civil and religious factions, they seemed to be disarmed in my behalf of their wonted fury. My friends never had occasion to vindicate any one circumstance of my character and conduct: Not but that the zealots, we may well suppose, would have been glad to invent and propagate any story to my disadvantage, but they could never find any which they thought would wear the face of probability. I cannot say there is no vanity in making this funeral oration of myself; but I hope it is not a misplaced one; and this is a matter of fact which is easily cleared and ascertained.

April 18, 1776.

LETTER

FROM

ADAM SMITH, LL.D.

TO

WILLIAM STRAHAN, Efq.

DEAR SIR, Kirkaldy, Fifefhire, Nov. 9, 1776.

IT is with a real, though a very melancholy pleafure, that I fit down to give you fome account of the behaviour of our late excellent friend, Mr. Hume, during his laft illnefs.

THOUGH in his own judgment his difeafe was mortal and incurable, yet he allowed himfelf to be prevailed upon, by the entreaty of his friends, to try what might be the effects of a long journey. A few days before he fet out, he wrote that account of his own life, which, together with his other papers, he has left to your care. My account, therefore, fhall begin where his ends.

HE fet out for London towards the end of April, and at Morpeth met with Mr. John Home and myfelf, who had both come down from London on pur-

pofe to fee him, expecting to have found him at Edinburgh. Mr. Home returned with him, and attended him during the whole of his ftay in England, with that care and attention which might be expected from a temper fo perfectly friendly and affectionate. As I had written to my mother that fhe might expect me in Scotland, I was under the neceffity of continuing my journey. His difeafe feemed to yield to exercife and change of air, and when he arrived in London, he was apparently in much better health than when he left Edinburgh. He was advifed to go to Bath to drink the waters, which appeared for fome time to have fo good an effect upon him, that even he himfelf began to entertain, what he was not apt to do, a better opinion of his own health. His fymptoms, however, foon returned with their ufual violence, and from that moment he gave up all thoughts of recovery, but fubmitted with the utmoft cheerfulnefs, and the moft perfect complacency and refignation. Upon his return to Edinburgh, though he found himfelf much weaker, yet his cheerfulnefs never abated, and he continued to divert himfelf, as ufual, with correcting his own works for a new edition, with reading books of amufement, with the converfation of his friends; and fometimes in the evening with a party at his favourite game of whift. His cheerfulnefs was fo great, and his converfation and amufements run fo much in their ufual ftrain, that, notwithftanding all bad fymptoms, many people could not believe he was dying. "I fhall tell your "friend, Colonel Edmondftone," faid Doctor Dundas to him one day, "that I left you much better, "and in a fair way of recovery." "Doctor," faid he, "as I believe you would not choofe to tell any

"thing

"thing but the truth, you had better tell him, that "I am dying as faſt as my enemies, if I have any, "could wiſh, and as eaſily and cheerfully as my beſt "friends could deſire." Colonel Edmondſtone ſoon afterwards came to ſee him, and take leave of him; and on his way home he could not forbear writing him a letter, bidding him once more an eternal adieu, and applying to him, as to a dying man, the beautiful French verſes in which the Abbé Chaulieu, in expectation of his own death, laments his approaching ſeparation from his friend the Marquis de la Fare. Mr. Hume's magnanimity and firmneſs were ſuch, that his moſt affectionate friends knew that they hazarded nothing in talking or writing to him as to a dying man, and that ſo far from being hurt by this frankneſs, he was rather pleaſed and flattered by it. I happened to come into his room while he was reading this letter, which he had juſt received, and which he immediately ſhewed me. I told him, that though I was ſenſible how very much he was weakened, and that appearances were in many reſpects very bad, yet his cheerfulneſs was ſtill ſo great, the ſpirit of life ſeemed ſtill to be ſo very ſtrong in him, that I could not help entertaining ſome faint hopes. He anſwered, "Your hopes are groundleſs. "An habitual diarrhœa of more than a year's ſtand-"ing, would be a very bad diſeaſe at any age: At my "age, it is a mortal one. When I lie down in the "evening, I feel myſelf weaker than when I roſe in "the morning; and when I riſe in the morning "weaker than when I lay down in the evening. I "am ſenſible, beſides, that ſome of my vital parts "are affected, ſo that I muſt ſoon die." "Well," ſaid I, "if it muſt be ſo, you have at leaſt the ſatiſ-

" faction of leaving all your friends, your brother's " family in particular, in great profperity." He faid, that he felt that fatisfaction fo fenfibly, that when he was reading, a few days before, Lucian's Dialogues of the Dead, among all the excufes which are alleged to Charon for not entering readily into his boat, he could not find one that fitted him; he had no houfe to finifh, he had no daughter to provide for, he had no enemies upon whom he wifhed to revenge himfelf. " I could not well imagine," faid he, " what excufe I could make to Charon in order " to obtain a little delay. I have done every thing " of confequence which I ever meant to do, and I " could at no time expect to leave my relations and " friends in a better fituation than that in which I " am now likely to leave them: I therefore have all " reafon to die contented." He then diverted himfelf with inventing feveral jocular excufes which he fuppofed he might make to Charon, and with imagining the very furly anfwers which it might fuit the character of Charon to return to them. " Upon fur" ther confideration," faid he, " I thought I might " fay to him, "Good Charon, I have been correcting " my works for a new edition. Allow me a little " time, that I may fee how the Public receives the " alterations." But Charon would anfwer, " When " you have feen the effect of thefe, you will be for " making other alterations. There will be no end " of fuch excufes; fo, honeft friend, pleafe ftep into " the boat." But I might ftill urge, " Have a little " patience, good Charon, I have been endeavouring " to open the eyes of the Public. If I live a few " years longer, I may have the fatisfaction of feeing " the downfal of fome of the prevailing fyftems of

" superstition." But Charon would then lose all temper and decency. " You loitering rogue, that " will not happen these many hundred years. Do " you fancy I will grant you a lease for so long a " term? Get into the boat this instant, you lazy " loitering rogue."

BUT though Mr. Hume always talked of his approaching dissolution with great cheerfulness, he never affected to make any parade of his magnanimity. He never mentioned the subject but when the conversation naturally led to it, and never dwelt longer upon it than the course of the conversation happened to require. It was a subject, indeed, which occurred pretty frequently, in consequence of the inquiries which his friends, who came to see him, naturally made concerning the state of his health. The conversation which I mentioned above, and which passed on Thursday the 8th of August, was the last, except one, that I ever had with him. He had now become so very weak, that the company of his most intimate friends fatigued him; for his cheerfulness was still so great, his complaisance and social disposition were still so entire, that when any friend was with him, he could not help talking more, and with greater exertion, than suited the weakness of his body. At his own desire, therefore, I agreed to leave Edinburgh, where I was staying partly upon his account, and returned to my mother's house here at Kirkaldy, upon condition that he would send for me whenever he wished to see me; the physician who saw him most frequently, Doctor Black, undertaking, in the mean time, to write me occasionally an account of the state of his health.

On the 22d of August the Doctor wrote me the following letter:

"Since my laſt, Mr. Hume has paſſed his time pretty eaſily, but is much weaker. He ſits up, goes down ſtairs once a day, and amuſes himſelf with reading, but ſeldom ſees any body. He finds that even the converſation of his moſt intimate friends fatigues and oppreſſes him; and it is happy that he does not need it, for he is quite free from anxiety, impatience, or low ſpirits, and paſſes his time very well with the aſſiſtance of amuſing books."

I received the day after a letter from Mr. Hume himſelf, of which the following is an extract:

"MY DEAREST FRIEND, Edinburgh, Aug. 23, 1776.

"I am obliged to make uſe of my nephew's hand in writing to you, as I do not riſe to-day. * * * * * * * * * * *

"I go very faſt to decline, and laſt night had a ſmall fever, which I hoped might put a quicker period to this tedious illneſs; but unluckily it has in a great meaſure gone off. I cannot ſubmit to your coming over here on my account, as it is poſſible for me to ſee you ſo ſmall a part of the day; but Doctor Black can better inform you concerning the degree of ſtrength which may from time to time remain with me. Adieu, &c."

Three days after, I received the following letter from Doctor Black:

"DEAR SIR, Edinburgh, Monday, Aug. 26, 1776.

"Yesterday, about four o'clock afternoon, Mr. Hume expired. The near approach of his death be-

came evident in the night between Thursday and Friday, when his disease became excessive, and soon weakened him so much, that he could no longer rise out of his bed. He continued to the last perfectly sensible, and free from much pain or feelings of distress. He never dropped the smallest expression of impatience; but when he had occasion to speak to the people about him, always did it with affection and tenderness. I thought it improper to write to bring you over, especially as I heard that he had dictated a letter to you, desiring you not to come. When he became very weak, it cost him an effort to speak, and he died in such a happy composure of mind that nothing could exceed it."

Thus died our most excellent and never-to-be forgotten friend; concerning whose philosophical opinions men will no doubt judge variously, every one approving or condemning them, according as they happen to coincide or disagree with his own; but concerning whose character and conduct there can scarce be a difference of opinion. His temper, indeed, seemed to be more happily balanced, if I may be allowed such an expression, than that perhaps of any other man I have ever known. Even in the lowest state of his fortune, his great and necessary frugality never hindered him from exercising, upon proper occasions, acts both of charity and generosity. It was a frugality founded not upon avarice, but upon the love of independency. The extreme gentleness of his nature never weakened either the firmness of his mind, or the steadiness of his resolutions. His constant pleasantry was the genuine effusion of good-nature and good-humour, tempered with delicacy and modesty,

modeſty, and without even the ſlighteſt tincture of malignity, ſo frequently the diſagreeable ſource of what is called wit in other men. It never was the meaning of his raillery to mortify; and therefore, far from offending, it ſeldom failed to pleaſe and delight even thoſe who were the objects of it. To his friends, who were frequently the objects of it, there was not, perhaps, any one of all his great and amiable qualities which contributed more to endear his converſation. And that gaiety of temper ſo agreeable in ſociety, but which is ſo often accompanied with frivolous and ſuperficial qualities, was in him certainly attended with the moſt ſevere application, the moſt extenſive learning, the greateſt depth of thought, and a capacity in every reſpect the moſt comprehenſive. Upon the whole, I have always conſidered him, both in his life-time and ſince his death, as approaching as nearly to the idea of a perfectly wiſe and virtuous man as perhaps the nature of human frailty will permit.

I ever am, dear Sir,

Moſt affectionately your's,

ADAM SMITH.

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THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

CHAP. I.

The Britons,——Romans,——Saxons,——the Heptarchy.——The Kingdom of Kent——of Northumberland——of East-Anglia——of Mercia——of Essex——of Sussex——of Wessex.

The BRITONS.

CHAP. I.

THE curiosity, entertained by all civilized nations, of enquiring into the exploits and adventures of their ancestors, commonly excites a regret that the history of remote ages should always be so much involved in obscurity, uncertainty, and contradiction. Ingenious men, possessed of leisure, are apt to push their researches beyond the period in which literary monuments are framed or preserved; without reflecting, that the history of past events is immediately lost or disfigured when entrusted to memory and oral tradition, and that the adventures of barbarous nations, even if they were recorded, could afford little or no entertainment to men born in a more cultivated age. The convulsions of a civilized

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ſtate uſually compoſe the moſt inſtructive and moſt intereſting part of its hiſtory; but the ſudden, violent, and unprepared revolutions incident to Barbarians, are ſo much guided by caprice and terminate ſo often in cruelty, that they diſguſt us by the uniformity of their appearance; and it is rather fortunate for letters that they are buried in ſilence and oblivion. The only certain means by which nations can indulge their curioſity in reſearches concerning their remote origin, is to conſider the language, manners, and cuſtoms of their anceſtors, and to compare them with thoſe of the neighbouring nations. The fables which are commonly employed to ſupply the place of true hiſtory, ought entirely to be diſregarded; or if any exception be admitted to this general rule, it can only be in favour of the ancient Grecian fictions, which are ſo celebrated and ſo agreeable, that they will ever be the objects of the attention of mankind. Neglecting, therefore, all traditions, or rather tales, concerning the more early hiſtory of Britain, we ſhall only conſider the ſtate of the inhabitants as it appeared to the Romans on their invaſion of this country: We ſhall briefly run over the events which attended the conqueſt made by that empire, as belonging more to Roman than Britiſh ſtory: We ſhall haſten through the obſcure and unintereſting period of Saxon Annals: And ſhall reſerve a more full narration for thoſe times when the truth is both ſo well aſcertained and ſo complete as to promiſe entertainment and inſtruction to the reader.

All ancient writers agree in repreſenting the firſt inhabitants of Britain as a tribe of the Gauls or Celtæ, who peopled that iſland from the neighbouring continent. Their language was the ſame, their manners, their government, their ſuperſtition; varied only by thoſe ſmall differences, which time or a communication with the bordering nations muſt neceſſarily introduce. The inhabitants of Gaul, eſpecially

cially in thoſe parts which lie contiguous to Italy, had acquired, from a commerce with their ſouthern neighbours, ſome refinement in the arts, which gradually diffuſed themſelves northwards, and ſpread but a very faint light over this iſland. The Greek and Roman navigators or merchants (for there were ſcarcely any other travellers in thoſe ages) brought back the moſt ſhocking accounts of the ferocity of the people, which they magnified, as uſual, in order to excite the admiration of their countrymen. The ſouth-eaſt parts, however, of Britain, had already, before the age of Cæſar, made the firſt and moſt requiſite ſtep towards a civil ſettlement; and the Britons, by tillage and agriculture, had there increaſed to a great multitude [a]. The other inhabitants of the iſland ſtill maintained themſelves by paſture: They were clothed with ſkins of beaſts: They dwelt in huts, which they reared in the foreſts and marſhes, with which the country was covered: They ſhifted eaſily their habitation, when actuated either by the hopes of plunder, or the fear of an enemy: The convenience of feeding their cattle was even a ſufficient motive for removing their ſeats: And as they were ignorant of all the refinements of life, their wants and their poſſeſſions were equally ſcanty and limited.

The Britons were divided into many ſmall nations or tribes; and being a military people, whoſe ſole property was their arms and their cattle, it was impoſſible, after they had acquired a reliſh of liberty, for their princes or chieftains to eſtabliſh any deſpotic authority over them. Their governments, though monarchical [b], were free, as well as thoſe of all the Celtic nations; and the common people ſeem even to have enjoyed more liberty among them [c], than among the nations of Gaul [d], from whom they were deſcended. Each ſtate was divided into factions

[a] Cæſar, lib. 4.
[b] Diod. Sic. lib. 4. Mela, lib. 3. cap. 6. Strabo, lib. 4.
[c] Dion. Caſſius, lib. 75.
[d] Cæſar, lib. 6.

 within

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within itſelf[e]: It was agitated with jealouſy or animoſity againſt the neighbouring ſtates: And while the arts of peace were yet unknown, wars were the chief occupation, and formed the chief object of ambition among the people.

THE religion of the Britons was one of the moſt conſiderable parts of their government; and the Druids, who were their prieſts, poſſeſſed great authority among them. Beſides miniſtering at the altar, and directing all religious duties, they preſided over the education of youth; they enjoyed an immunity from wars and taxes; they poſſeſſed both the civil and criminal juriſdiction; they decided all controverſies among ſtates as well as among private perſons, and whoever refuſed to ſubmit to their decree was expoſed to the moſt ſevere penalties. The ſentence of excommunication was pronounced againſt him: He was forbidden acceſs to the ſacrifices or public worſhip: He was debarred all intercourſe with his fellow-citizens, even in the common affairs of life: His company was univerſally ſhunned, as profane and dangerous: He was refuſed the protection of law[f]: And death itſelf became an acceptable relief from the miſery and infamy to which he was expoſed. Thus, the bands of government, which were naturally looſe among that rude and turbulent people, were happily corroborated by the terrors of their ſuperſtition.

NO ſpecies of ſuperſtition was ever more terrible than that of the Druids. Beſides the ſevere penalties, which it was in the power of the eccleſiaſtics to inflict in this world, they inculcated the eternal tranſmigration of ſouls; and thereby extended their authority as far as the fears of their timorous votaries. They practiſed their rites in dark groves or other ſecret receſſes[g]; and in order to throw a greater myſtery over their religion, they communicated their

[e] Tacit. Agr. [f] Cæſar, lib. 6. Strabo, lib. 4.
[g] Plin. lib. 12. cap. 1.

doctrines

doctrines only to the initiated, and strictly forbad the committing of them to writing; lest they should at any time be exposed to the examination of the profane vulgar. Human sacrifices were practised among them: The spoils of war were often devoted to their divinities; and they punished with the severest tortures whoever dared to secrete any part of the consecrated offering: These treasures they kept in woods and forests, secured by no other guard than the terrors of their religion[h]; and this steady conquest over human avidity may be regarded as more signal than their prompting men to the most extraordinary and most violent efforts. No idolatrous worship ever attained such an ascendant over mankind as that of the ancient Gauls and Britons; and the Romans, after their conquest, finding it impossible to reconcile those nations to the laws and institutions of their masters, while it maintained its authority, were at last obliged to abolish it by penal statutes; a violence which had never, in any other instance, been practised by those tolerating conquerors[i].

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The ROMANS.

THE Britons had long remained in this rude but independent state, when Cæsar, having over-run all Gaul by his victories, first cast his eye on their island. He was not allured either by its riches or its renown; but being ambitious of carrying the Roman arms into a new world, then mostly unknown, he took advantage of a short interval in his Gaulic wars, and made an invasion on Britain. The natives, informed of his intention, were sensible of the unequal contest, and endeavoured to appease him by submissions, which, however, retarded not the execution of his design. After some resistance, he landed, as is supposed, at Deal; and having ob- Anno ante C. 55.

h Cæsar, lib. 6. i Sueton. in vita Claudii.

CHAP. I. tained ſeveral advantages over the Britons, and obliged them to promiſe hoſtages for their future obedience, he was conſtrained, by the neceſſity of his affairs, and the approach of winter, to withdraw his forces into Gaul. The Britons, relieved from the terror of his arms, neglected the performance of their ſtipulations; and that haughty conqueror reſolved next ſummer to chaſtiſe them for this breach of treaty. He landed with a greater force; and though he found a more regular reſiſtance from the Britons, who had united under Caſſivelaunus, one of their petty princes, he diſcomfitted them in every action. He advanced into the country; paſſed the Thames in the face of the enemy; took and burned the capital of Caſſivelaunus; eſtabliſhed his ally, Mandubratius, in the ſovereignty of the Trinobantes; and having obliged the inhabitants to make him new ſubmiſſions, he again returned with his army into Gaul, and left the authority of the Romans more nominal than real in this iſland.

The civil wars which enſued, and which prepared the way for the eſtabliſhment of monarchy in Rome, ſaved the Britons from that yoke which was ready to be impoſed upon them. Auguſtus, the ſucceſſor of Cæſar, content with the victory obtained over the liberties of his own country, was little ambitious of acquiring fame by foreign wars; and being apprehenſive leſt the ſame unlimited extent of dominion, which had ſubverted the republic, might alſo overwhelm the empire, he recommended it to his ſucceſſors never to enlarge the territories of the Romans. Tiberius, jealous of the fame which might be acquired by his generals, made this advice of Auguſtus a pretence for his inactivity[k]. The mad ſallies of Caligula, in which he menaced Britain with an invaſion, ſerved only to expoſe himſelf and the empire to ridicule: And the Britons had now, during

[k] Tacit. Agr.

almoſt

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almoſt a century, enjoyed their liberty unmoleſted; when the Romans, in the reign of Claudius, began to think ſeriouſly of reducing them under their dominion. Without ſeeking any more juſtifiable reaſons of hoſtility than were employed by the late Europeans in ſubjecting the Africans and Americans, they ſent over an army under the command of Plautius, an able general, who gained ſome victories, and made a conſiderable progreſs in ſubduing the inhabitants. Claudius himſelf, finding matters ſufficiently prepared for his reception, made a journey into Britain, and received the ſubmiſſion of ſeveral Britiſh ſtates, the Cantii, Atrebates, Regni, and Trinobantes, who inhabited the ſouth-eaſt parts of the iſland, and whom their poſſeſſions and more cultivated manner of life rendered willing to purchaſe peace at the expence of their liberty. The other Britons, under the command of Caractacus, ſtill maintained an obſtinate reſiſtance, and the Romans made little progreſs againſt them; till Oſtorius Scapula was ſent over to command their armies. This general advanced the Roman conqueſts over the Britons; pierced into the country of the Silures a warlike nation, who inhabited the banks of the Severne; defeated Caractacus in a great battle; took him priſoner, and ſent him to Rome, where his magnanimous behaviour procured him better treatment than thoſe conquerors uſually beſtowed on captive princes[1].

A. D. 43

A. D. 50.

NOTWITHSTANDING theſe misfortunes, the Britons were not ſubdued; and this iſland was regarded by the ambitious Romans as a field in which military honour might ſtill be acquired. Under the reign of Nero, Suetonius Paulinus was inveſted with the command, and prepared to ſignalize his name by victories over thoſe barbarians. Finding that the iſland of Mona, now Angleſey, was the chief ſeat

A. D. 59.

1 Tacit. Ann. lib. 12.

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of the Druids, he reſolved to attack it, and to ſubject a place which was the centre of their ſuperſtition, and which afforded protection to all their baffled forces. The Britons endeavoured to obſtruct his landing on this ſacred iſland, both by the force of their arms, and the terrors of their religion. The women and prieſts were intermingled with the ſoldiers upon the ſhore; and running about with flaming torches in their hands, and toſſing their diſhevelled hair, they ſtruck greater terror into the aſtoniſhed Romans by their howlings, cries, and execrations, than the real danger from the armed forces was able to inſpire. But Suetonius, exhorting his troops to deſpiſe the menaces of a ſuperſtition which they deſpiſed, impelled them to the attack, drove the Britons off the field, burned the Druids in the ſame fires which thoſe prieſts had prepared for their captive enemies, deſtroyed all the conſecrated groves and altars; and, having thus triumphed over the religion of the Britons, he thought his future progreſs would be eaſy, in reducing the people to ſubjection. But he was diſappointed in his expectations. The Britons, taking advantage of his abſence, were all in arms; and headed by Boadicea, queen of the Iceni, who had been treated in the moſt ignominious manner by the Roman tribunes, had already attacked with ſucceſs ſeveral ſettlements of their inſulting conquerors. Suetonius haſtened to the protection of London, which was already a flouriſhing Roman colony; but he found on his arrival, that it would be requiſite for the general ſafety to abandon that place to the mercileſs fury of the enemy. London was reduced to aſhes; ſuch of the inhabitants as remained in it were cruelly maſſacred; the Romans and all ſtrangers, to the number of 70,000, were every where put to the ſword without diſtinction; and the Britons, by rendering the war thus bloody, ſeemed determined to cut off all hopes of peace or compoſition with the enemy. But this cruelty was

revenged by Suetonius in a great and decisive battle, where 80,000 of the Britons are said to have perished; and Boadicea herself, rather than fall into the hands of the enraged victor, put an end to her own life by poison [m]. Nero soon after recalled Suetonius from a government, where, by suffering and inflicting so many severities, he was judged improper for composing the angry and alarmed minds of the inhabitants. After some interval, Cerealis received the command from Vespasian, and by his bravery propagated the terror of the Roman arms. Julius Frontinus succeeded Cerealis both in authority and in reputation: But the general who finally established the dominion of the Romans in this island, was Julius Agricola, who governed it in the reigns of Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian, and distinguished himself in that scene of action.

This great commander formed a regular plan for subduing Britain, and rendering the acquisition useful to the conquerors. He carried his victorious arms northwards, defeated the Britons in every encounter, pierced into the inaccessible forests and mountains of Caledonia, reduced every state to subjection in the southern parts of the island, and chased before him all the men of fiercer and more intractable spirits, who deemed war and death itself less intolerable than servitude under the victors. He even defeated them in a decisive action, which they fought under Galgacus, their leader; and having fixed a chain of garrisons, between the friths of Clyde and Forth, he thereby cut off the ruder and more barren parts of the island, and secured the Roman province from the incursions of the barbarous inhabitants [n].

During these military enterprises, he neglected not the arts of peace. He introduced laws and civility among the Britons, taught them to desire and raise all the conveniencies of life, reconciled them to

[m] Tacit. Ann. lib. 14. [n] Tacit. Agr.

the

the Roman language and manners, inſtructed them in letters and ſcience, and employed every expedient to render thoſe chains, which he had forged, both eaſy and agreeable to them[o]. The inhabitants, having experienced how unequal their own force was to reſiſt that of the Romans, acquieſced in the dominion of their maſters, and were gradually incorporated as a part of that mighty empire.

THIS was the laſt durable conqueſt made by the Romans; and Britain, once ſubdued, gave no farther inquietude to the Victor. Caledonia alone, defended by its barren mountains, and by the contempt which the Romans entertained for it, ſometimes infeſted the more cultivated parts of the iſland by the incurſions of its inhabitants. The better to ſecure the frontiers of the empire, Adrian, who viſited this iſland, built a rampart between the river Tyne and the frith of Solway: Lollius Urbicus, under Antoninus Pius, erected one in the place where Agricola had formerly eſtabliſhed his garriſons: Severus, who made an expedition into Britain, and carried his arms to the moſt northern extremity of it, added new fortifications to the wall of Adrian; and during the reigns of all the Roman emperors, ſuch a profound tranquillity prevailed in Britain, that little mention is made of the affairs of that iſland by any hiſtorian. The only incidents which occur, are ſome ſeditions or rebellions of the Roman legions quartered there, and ſome uſurpations of the imperial dignity by the Roman governors. The natives, diſarmed, diſpirited, and ſubmiſſive, had loſt all deſire, and even idea, of their former liberty and independence.

BUT the period was now come when that enormous fabric of the Roman empire, which had diffuſed ſlavery and oppreſſion, together with peace and civility, over ſo conſiderable a part of the globe, was approaching towards its final diſſolution. Italy,

[o] Tacit. Agr.

and

and the centre of the empire, removed, during so many ages, from all concern in the wars, had entirely lost the military spirit, and were peopled by an enervated race, equally disposed to submit to a foreign yoke, or to the tyranny of their own rulers. The emperors found themselves obliged to recruit their legions from the frontier provinces, where the genius of war, though languishing, was not totally extinct; and these mercenary forces, careless of laws and civil institutions, established a military government, no less dangerous to the sovereign than to the people. The farther progress of the same disorders introduced the bordering barbarians into the service of the Romans; and those fierce nations, having now added discipline to their native bravery, could no longer be restrained by the impotent policy of the emperors, who were accustomed to employ one in the destruction of the others. Sensible of their own force, and allured by the prospect of so rich a prize, the northern barbarians, in the reign of Arcadius and Honorius, assailed at once all the frontiers of the Roman empire; and having first satiated their avidity by plunder, began to think of fixing a settlement in the wasted provinces. The more distant barbarians, who occupied the deserted habitations of the former, advanced in their acquisitions, and pressed with their incumbent weight the Roman state, already unequal to the load which it sustained. Instead of arming the people in their own defence, the emperors recalled all the distant legions, in whom alone they could repose confidence; and collected the whole military force for the defence of the capital and centre of the empire. The necessity of self-preservation had superseded the ambition of power; and the ancient point of honour, never to contract the limits of the empire, could no longer be attended to in this desperate extremity.

Britain by its situation was removed from the fury of these barbarous incursions; and being also a remote

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remote province, not much valued by the Romans, the legions which defended it were carried over to the protection of Italy and Gaul. But that province, though secured by the sea against the inroads of the greater tribes of barbarians, found enemies on its frontiers, who took advantage of its present defenceless situation. The Picts and Scots, who dwelt in the northern parts, beyond the Wall of Antoninus, made incursions upon their peaceable and effeminate neighbours; and besides the temporary depredations which they committed, these combined nations threatened the whole province with subjection, or what the inhabitants more dreaded, with plunder and devastation. The Picts seem to have been a tribe of the native British race, who, having been chased into the northern parts by the conquests of Agricola, had there intermingled with the ancient inhabitants: The Scots were derived from the same Celtic origin, had first been established in Ireland, had migrated to the north-west coasts of this island, and had long been accustomed, as well from their old as their new seats, to infest the Roman province by piracy and rapine*. These tribes, finding their more opulent neighbours exposed to invasion, soon broke over the Roman wall, no longer defended by the Roman arms; and though a contemptible enemy in themselves, met with no resistance from the unwarlike inhabitants. The Britons, accustomed to have recourse to the emperors for defence as well as government, made supplications to Rome; and one legion was sent over for their protection. This force was an overmatch for the barbarians, repelled their invasion, routed them in every engagement, and having chased them into their ancient limits, returned in triumph to the defence of the southern provinces of the empire[p]. Their retreat brought on a new invasion of the enemy. The Britons made again an application to

* See Note [A] at the end of the Volume.

[p] Gildas, Bede, lib. 1. cap. 12. Paul. Diacon.

Rome, and again obtained the aſſiſtance of a legion, which proved effectual for their relief: But the Romans, reduced to extremities at home, and fatigued with thoſe diſtant expeditions, informed the Britons that they muſt no longer look to them for ſuccour, exhorted them to arm in their own defence, and urged, that as they were now their own maſters, it became them to protect by their valour that independence which their ancient lords had conferred upon them [q]. That they might leave the iſland with the better grace, the Romans aſſiſted them in erecting anew the wall of Severus, which was built entirely of ſtone, and which the Britons had not at that time artificers ſkilful enough to repair [r]. And having done this laſt good office to the inhabitants, they bid a final adieu to Britain, about the year 448; after being maſters of the more conſiderable part of it during the courſe of near four centuries.

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The BRITONS.

THE abject Britons regarded this preſent of liberty as fatal to them; and were in no condition to put in practice the prudent counſel given them by the Romans, to arm in their own defence. Unaccuſtomed both to the perils of war and to the cares of civil government, they found themſelves incapable of forming or executing any meaſures for reſiſting the incurſions of the barbarians. Gratian alſo and Conſtantine, two Romans, who had a little before aſſumed the purple in Britain, had carried over to the continent the flower of the Britiſh youth; and having periſhed in their unſucceſsful attempts on the imperial throne, had deſpoiled the iſland of thoſe who, in this deſperate extremity, were beſt able to defend it. The Picts and Scots, finding that the Romans had finally relinquiſhed Britain, now regarded

[q] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 12. [r] Ibid.

the

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the whole as their prey, and attacked the northern wall with redoubled forces. The Britons, already ſubdued by their own fears, found the ramparts but a weak defence for them; and deſerting their ſtation, left the country entirely open to the inroads of the barbarous enemy. The invaders carried devaſtation and ruin along with them; and exerted to the utmoſt their native ferocity, which was not mitigated by the helpleſs condition and ſubmiſſive behaviour of the inhabitants[s]. The unhappy Britons had a third time recourſe to Rome, which had declared its reſolution for ever to abandon them. Ætius, the patrician, ſuſtained, at that time, by his valour and magnanimity, the tottering ruins of the empire, and revived for a moment, among the degenerate Romans, the ſpirit, as well as diſcipline, of their anceſtors. The Britiſh ambaſſadors carried to him the letter of their countrymen, which was inſcribed, *The Groans of the Britons.* The tenor of the epiſtle was ſuitable to its ſuperſcription. *The Barbarians,* ſay they, *on the one hand, chaſe us into the ſea; the ſea on the other, throws us back upon the barbarians; and we have only the hard choice left us, of periſhing by the ſword or by the waves*[t]. But Ætius, preſſed by the arms of Attila, the moſt terrible enemy that ever aſſailed the empire, had no leiſure to attend to the complaints of allies, whom generoſity alone could induce him to aſſiſt[u]. The Britons, thus rejected, were reduced to deſpair, deſerted their habitations, abandoned tillage, and flying for protection to the foreſts and mountains, ſuffered equally from hunger and from the enemy. The barbarians themſelves began to feel the preſſures of famine in a country which they had ravaged; and being haraſſed by the diſperſed Britons, who had not dared to reſiſt them

[s] Gildas, Bede, lib. 1. Ann. Beverl. p. 45. [t] Gildas, Bede, lib. 1. cap. 13. Malmeſbury, lib. 1. cap. 1. Ann. Beverl. p. 45.
[u] Chron. Sax. p. 11. edit. 1692.

in

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in a body, they retreated with their ſpoils into their own country [w].

The Britons, taking advantage of this interval, returned to their uſual occupations; and the favourable ſeaſons, which ſucceeded, ſeconded their induſtry, made them ſoon forget their paſt miſeries, and reſtored to them great plenty of all the neceſſaries of life. No more can be imagined to have been poſſeſſed by a people ſo rude, who had not, without the aſſiſtance of the Romans, art of maſonry ſufficient to raiſe a ſtone rampart for their own defence: Yet the Monkiſh hiſtorians [x], who treat of thoſe events, complain of the luxury of the Britons during this period, and aſcribe to that vice, not to their cowardice or improvident counſels, all their ſubſequent calamities.

The Britons, entirely occupied in the enjoyment of the preſent interval of peace, made no proviſion for reſiſting the enemy, who, invited by their former timid behaviour, ſoon threatened them with a new invaſion. We are not exactly informed what ſpecies of civil government the Romans on their departure had left among the Britons; but it appears probable, that the great men in the different diſtricts aſſumed a kind of regal, though precarious authority; and lived in a great meaſure independent of each other [y]. To this diſunion of counſels were alſo added the diſputes of theology; and the diſciples of Pelagius, who was himſelf a native of Britain, having increaſed to a great multitude, gave alarm to the clergy, who ſeem to have been more intent on ſuppreſſing them, than on oppoſing the public enemy [z]. Labouring under theſe domeſtic evils, and menaced with a foreign invaſion, the Britons attended only to the ſuggeſtions of their preſent fears; and following the counſels of Vortigern, prince of Dumnonium, who, though ſtained

[w] Ann. Beverl. p. 45. [x] Gildas, Bede, lib. 1. cap. 14. [y] Gildas, Uſher, Ant. Brit. p. 248. 347. [z] Gildas, Bede, lib. 1. cap. 17. Conſtant. in vita Germ.

with

CHAP. I. with every vice, possessed the chief authority among them[a], they sent into Germany a deputation to invite over the Saxons for their protection and assistance.

The SAXONS.

OF all the barbarous nations, known either in ancient or modern times, the Germans seem to have been the most distinguished both by their manners and political institutions, and to have carried to the highest pitch the virtues of valour and love of liberty; the only virtues which can have place among an uncivilized people, where justice and humanity are commonly neglected. Kingly government, even when established among the Germans (for it was not universal), possessed a very limited Authority; and though the sovereign was usually chosen from among the royal family, he was directed in every measure by the common consent of the nation over whom he presided. When any important affairs were transacted, all the warriors met in arms; the men of greatest authority employed persuasion to engage their consent; the people expressed their approbation by rattling their armour, or their dissent by murmurs; there was no necessity for a nice scrutiny of votes among a multitude, who were usually carried with a strong current to one side or the other; and the measure, thus suddenly chosen by general agreement, was executed with alacrity, and prosecuted with vigour. Even in war, the princes governed more by example than by authority: But in peace, the civil union was in a great measure dissolved, and the inferior leaders administered justice after an independent manner, each in his particular district. These were elected by the votes of the people in their great councils;

[a] Gildas, Gulm. Malm. p. 8.

and though regard was paid to nobility in the choice, their perſonal qualities, chiefly their valour, procured them, from the ſuffrages of their fellow-citizens, that honourable but dangerous diſtinction. The warriors of each Tribe attached themſelves to their leader with the moſt devoted affection and moſt unſhaken conſtancy. They attended him as his ornament in peace, as his defence in war, as his council in the adminiſtration of juſtice. Their conſtant emulation in military renown diſſolved not that inviolable friendſhip which they profeſſed to their chieftain and to each other. To die for the honour of their band was their chief ambition: To ſurvive its diſgrace, or the death of their leader, was infamous. They even carried into the field their women and children, who adopted all the martial ſentiments of the men: And being thus impelled by every human motive, they were invincible; where they were not oppoſed either by the ſimilar manners and inſtitutions of the neighbouring Germans, or by the ſuperior diſcipline, arms, and numbers of the Romans [b].

The leaders and their military companions were maintained by the labour of their ſlaves, or by that of the weaker and leſs warlike part of the community whom they defended. The contributions which they levied went not beyond a bare ſubſiſtence; and the honours, acquired by a ſuperior rank, were the only reward of their ſuperior dangers and fatigues. All the refined arts of life were unknown among the Germans: Tillage itſelf was almoſt wholly neglected: They even ſeem to have been anxious to prevent any improvements of that nature; and the leaders, by annually diſtributing anew all the land among the inhabitants of each village, kept them from attaching themſelves to particular poſſeſſions, or making ſuch progreſs in agriculture as might

[b] Cæſar, lib. 6. Tacit. de Mor. Germ.

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divert their attention from military expeditions, the chief occupation of the community [c].

THE Saxons had been for ſome time regarded as one of the moſt warlike tribes of this fierce people, and had become the terror of the neigbouring nations [d]. They had diffuſed themſelves from the northern parts of Germany and the Cimbrian Cherſoneſus, and had taken poſſeſſion of all the ſea-coaſt from the mouth of the Rhine to Jutland; whence they had long infeſted by their piracies all the eaſtern and ſouthern parts of Britain, and the northern of Gaul [e]. In order to oppoſe their inroads, the Romans had eſtabliſhed an officer, whom they called *Count of the Saxon ſhore*; and as the naval arts can flouriſh among a civilized people alone, they ſeem to have been more ſucceſsful in repelling the Saxons, than any of the other barbarians by whom they were invaded. The diſſolution of the Roman power invited them to renew their inroads; and it was an acceptable circumſtance, that the deputies of the Britons appeared among them, and prompted them to undertake an enterprize, to which they were of themſelves ſufficiently inclined [f].

HENGIST and Horſa, two brothers, poſſeſſed great credit among the Saxons, and were much celebrated both for their valour and nobility. They were reputed, as moſt of the Saxon princes, to be ſprung from Woden, who was worſhipped as a god among thoſe nations, and they are ſaid to be his great grandſons [g]; a circumſtance which added much to their authority. We ſhall not attempt to trace any higher the origin of thoſe princes and nations. It is evident what fruitleſs labour it muſt be to ſearch, in thoſe barbarous and illiterate ages, for the

[c] Cæſar, lib. 6. Tacit. ibid. [d] Amm. Marcell. lib. 28. Oroſius. [e] Amm. Marcell. lib. 27. cap. 7. lib. 28. cap 7. [f] Will. Malm. p. 8. [g] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 15. Saxon Chron. p. 13. Nennius, cap 28.

annals

annals of a people, when their firſt leaders, known in any true hiſtory, were believed by them to be the fourth in deſcent from a fabulous deity, or from a man exalted by ignorance into that character. The dark induſtry of antiquaries, led by imaginary analogies of names, or by uncertain traditions, would in vain attempt to pierce into that deep obſcurity which covers the remote hiſtory of thoſe nations. CHAP. I.

THESE two brothers, obſerving the other provinces of Germany to be occupied by a warlike and neceſſitous people, and the rich provinces of Gaul already conquered or over-run by other German tribes, found it eaſy to perſuade their countrymen to embrace the ſole enterprize which promiſed a favourable opportunity of diſplaying their valour and gratifying their avidity. They embarked their troops in three veſſels, and about the year 449 or 450 [h], carried over 1600 men, who landed in the iſle of Thanet, and immediately marched to the defence of the Britons againſt the northern invaders. The Scots and Picts were unable to reſiſt the valour of theſe auxiliaries; and the Britons applauding their own wiſdom in calling over the Saxons, hoped thenceforth to enjoy peace and ſecurity under the powerful protection of that warlike people.

BUT Hengiſt and Horſa perceiving, from their eaſy victory over the Scots and Picts with what facility they might ſubdue the Britons themſelves, who had not been able to reſiſt thoſe feeble invaders, were determined to conquer and fight for their own grandeur, not for the defence of their degenerate allies. They ſent intelligence to Saxony of the fertility and riches of Britain; and repreſented as certain the ſubjection of a people ſo long diſuſed to arms, who, being now cut off from the Roman empire, of which they had been a province during ſo many ages, had not yet acquired any union

[h] Saxon Chronicle, p. 12. Gul. Malm. p. 11. Huntington, lib. 2. p. 309. Ethelwerd. Brompton, p. 728.

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among themſelves, and were deſtitute of all affection to their new liberties, and of all national attachments and regards[i]. The vices and puſillanimity of Vortigern, the Britiſh leader, were a new ground of hope; and the Saxons in Germany, following ſuch agreeable proſpects, ſoon reinforced Hengiſt and Horſa with 5000 men, who came over in ſeventeen veſſels. The Britons now began to entertain apprehenſions of their allies, whoſe numbers they found continually augmenting; but thought of no remedy, except a paſſive ſubmiſſion and connivance. This weak expedient ſoon failed them. The Saxons ſought a quarrel, by complaining that their ſuſidies were ill paid, and their proviſions withdrawn[k]: And immediately taking off the maſk, they formed an alliance with the Picts and Scots, and proceeded to open hoſtility againſt the Britons.

The Britons, impelled by theſe violent extremities, and rouſed to indignation againſt their treacherous auxiliaries, were neceſſitated to take arms; and having depoſed Vortigern, who had become odious from his vices, and from the bad event of his raſh counſels, they put themſelves under the command of his ſon Vortimer. They fought many battles with their enemies; and though the victories in theſe actions be diſputed between the Britiſh and Saxon annaliſts, the progreſs ſtill made by the Saxons proves that the advantage was commonly on their ſide. In one battle, however, fought at Eaglesford, now Ailsford, Horſa, the Saxon General, was ſlain, and left the ſole command over his countrymen in the hands of Hengiſt. This active general, continually reinforced by freſh numbers from Germany, carried devaſtation into the moſt remote corners of Britain; and being chiefly anxious to ſpread the terror of his arms, he ſpared neither age, nor ſex, nor condition, wherever he marched with his victorious forces.

i Chron. Sax. p. 12. Ann. Beverl p. 49. k Bede, lib. 1. cap. 15. Nennius, cap. 35. Gildas, § 23.

forces. The private and public edifices of the Britons were reduced to aſhes: The prieſts were ſlaughtered on the altars by thoſe idolatrous ravagers: The biſhops and nobility ſhared the fate of the vulgar: The people, flying to the mountains and deſerts, were intercepted and butchered in heaps: Some were glad to accept of life and ſervitude under their victors: Others, deſerting their native country, took ſhelter in the province of Armorica; where, being charitably received by a people of the ſame language and manners, they ſettled in great numbers, and gave the country the name of Brittany[l].

The Britiſh writers aſſign one cauſe which facilitated the entrance of the Saxons into this iſland; the love with which Vortigern was at firſt ſeized for Rovena, the daughter of Hengiſt, and which that artful warrior made uſe of to blind the eyes of the imprudent monarch[m]. The ſame hiſtorians add, that Vortimer died; and that Vortigern, being reſtored to the throne, accepted of a banquet from Hengiſt at Stonehenge, where 300 of his nobility were treacherouſly ſlaughtered, and himſelf detained captive[n]. But theſe ſtories ſeem to have been invented by the Welſh authors, in order to palliate the weak reſiſtance made at firſt by their countrymen, and to account for the rapid progreſs and licentious devaſtations of the Saxons[o].

After the death of Vortimer, Ambroſius, a Briton, though of Roman deſcent, was inveſted with the command over his countrymen, and endeavoured, not without ſucceſs, to unite them in their reſiſtance againſt the Saxons. Thoſe conteſts increaſed the animoſity between the two nations, and rouſed the military ſpirit of the ancient inhabitants, which had before been ſunk into a fatal lethargy.

[l] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 15. Uſher, p. 226. Gildas, § 24.

[m] Nennius, Galfr. lib. 6. cap. 12. [n] Nennius, cap. 47. Galfr.

[o] Stillingfleet's Orig. Brit. p. 324, 325.

 Hengiſt,

CHAP. I. Hengist, however, notwithstanding their opposition, still maintained his ground in Britain; and in order to divide the forces and attention of the natives, he called over a new tribe of Saxons, under the command of his brother Octa, and of Ebissa, the son of Octa; and he settled them in Northumberland. He himself remained in the southern parts of the island, and laid the foundation of the kingdom of Kent, comprehending the county of that name, Middlesex, Essex, and part of Surry. He fixed his royal seat at Canterbury; where he governed about forty years, and he died in or near the year 488; leaving his new acquired dominions to his posterity.

The success of Hengist excited the avidity of the other northern Germans; and at different times, and under different leaders, they flocked over in multitudes to the invasion of this island. These conquerors were chiefly composed of three tribes, the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes [p], who all passed under the common appellation, sometimes of Saxons, sometimes of Angles; and speaking the same language, and being governed by the same institutions, they were naturally led from these causes as well as from their common interest, to unite themselves against the ancient inhabitants. The resistance however, though unequal, was still maintained by the Britons; but became every day more feeble: And their calamities admitted of few intervals, till they were driven into Cornwal and Wales, and received protection from the remote situation or inaccessible mountains of those countries.

The first Saxon state, after that of Kent, which was established in Britain, was the kingdom of South Saxony. In the year 477 [q], Ælla, a Saxon

[p] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 15. Ethelwerd, p. 833. edit. Camdeni. Chron. Sax. p. 12. Ann. Beverl. p. 78. The inhabitants of Kent and the Isle of Wight were Jutes. Essex, Middlesex, Surry, Sussex, and all the Southern counties to Cornwal, were peopled by Saxons: Mercia, and other parts of the kingdom, were inhabited by Angles.

[q] Chron. Sax. p. 14. Ann. Beverl. p. 81.

chief, brought over an army from Germany; and landing on the southern coast, proceeded to take possession of the neighbouring territory. The Britons, now armed, did not tamely abandon their possessions; nor were they expelled, till defeated in many battles by their warlike invaders. The most memorable action, mentioned by historians, is that of Meacredes-Burn [r]; where, though the Saxons seem to have obtained the victory, they suffered so considerable a loss, as somewhat retarded the progress of their conquests. But Ælla, reinforced by fresh numbers of his countrymen, again took the field against the Britons; and laid siege to Andred-Ceaster, which was defended by the garrison and inhabitants with desperate valour [s]. The Saxons, enraged by this resistance, and by the fatigues and dangers which they had sustained, redoubled their efforts against the place, and when masters of it, put all their enemies to the sword without distinction. This decisive advantage secured the conquests of Ælla, who assumed the name of King, and extended his dominion over Sussex and a great part of Surry. He was stopped in his progress to the east by the kingdom of Kent: In that to the West by another tribe of Saxons, who had taken possession of that territory. CHAP. I.

THESE Saxons, from the situation of the country in which they settled, were called the West Saxons, and landed in the year 495, under the command of Cerdic, and of his son Kenric [t]. The Britons were, by past experience, so much on their guard, and so well prepared to receive the enemy, that they gave battle to Cerdic the very day of his landing; and though vanquished, still defended, for some time, their liberties against the invaders. None of the other tribes of Saxons met with such vigorous resistance, or exerted such valour and perseverance in

[r] Saxon Chron. A. D. 485. Flor. Wigorn. [s] Hen. Hunting. lib. 2. [t] Will. Malm. lib. 1. cap. 1. p. 12. Chron. Sax. p. 15.

pushing their conquests. Cerdic was even obliged to call for the assistance of his countrymen from the kingdoms of Kent and Sussex, as well as from Germany, and he was thence joined by a fresh army under the command of Porte, and of his sons Bleda and Megla [u]. Strengthened by these succours, he fought, in the year 508, a desperate battle with the Britons, commanded by Nazan-Leod, who was victorious in the beginning of the action, and routed the wing in which Cerdic himself commanded; but Kenric, who had prevailed in the other wing, brought timely assistance to his father, and restored the battle, which ended in a complete victory gained by the Saxons [w]. Nazan-Leod perished, with 5000 of his army; but left the Britons more weakened than discouraged by his death. The war still continued, though the success was commonly on the side of the Saxons, whose short swords, and close manner of fighting, gave them great advantage over the missile weapons of the Britons. Cerdic was not wanting to his good fortune; and in order to extend his conquests, he laid siege to Mount Badon or Banesdowne near Bath, whither the most obstinate of the discomfited Britons had retired. The southern Britons, in this extremity, applied for assistance to Arthur, Prince of the Silures, whose heroic valour now sustained the declining fate of his country [x]. This is that Arthur so much celebrated in the songs of Thaliessin, and the other British bards, and whose military atchievements have been blended with so many fables, as even to give occasion for entertaining a doubt of his real existence. But poets, though they disfigure the most certain history by their fictions, and use strange liberties with truth where they are the sole historians, as among the Britons, have commonly some foundation for their wildest exaggerations. Certain it is,

[u] Chron. Sax. p. 17. [w] H. Hunting lib 2. Ethelwerd, lib. 1. Chron. Sax. p. 17. [x] Hunting. lib. 2.

that

that the siege of Badon was raised by the Britons in the year 520: And the Saxons were there discomfited in a great battle[y]. This misfortune stopped the progress of Cerdic; but was not sufficient to wrest from him the conquests which he had already made. He and his son Kenric, who succeeded him, established the kingdom of the West Saxons, or of Wessex, over the counties of Hants, Dorset, Wilts, Berks, and the Isle of Wight, and left their new-acquired dominions to their posterity. Cerdic died in 534, Kenric in 560. CHAP. I.

WHILE the Saxons made this progress in the south, their countrymen were not less active in other quarters. In the year 527, a great tribe of adventurers, under several leaders, landed on the east coast of Britain; and after fighting many battles, of which history has preserved no particular account, they established three new kingdoms in this island. Uffa assumed the title of king of the East-Angles in 575; Crida that of Mercia in 585[z]; and Erkenwin that of East-Saxony or Essex nearly about the same time, but the year is uncertain. This latter kingdom was dismembered from that of Kent, and comprehended Essex, Middlesex, and part of Hertfordshire. That of the East-Angles, the counties of Cambridge, Suffolk, and Norfolk; Mercia was extended over all the middle counties, from the banks of the Severn, to the frontiers of these two kingdoms.

THE Saxons, soon after the landing of Hengist, had been planted in Northumberland; but, as they met with an obstinate resistance, and made but small progress in subduing the inhabitants, their affairs were in so unsettled a condition, that none of their princes for a long time assumed the appellation of king. At last, in 547[a], Ida, a Saxon prince of great valour[b], who claimed a descent, as did all

[y] Gildas, Saxon Chron. H. Hunting. lib. 2. [z] Math. West. Huntington, lib. 2. [a] Chron. Sax. p. 19. [b] Will. Malmf. p. 19.

the

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the other princes of that nation, from Woden, brought over a reinforcement from Germany, and enabled the Northumbrians to carry on their conquests over the Britons. He entirely subdued the county now called Northumberland, the bishopric of Durham, as well as some of the south-east counties of Scotland; and he assumed the crown under the title of king of Bernicia. Nearly about the same time, Ælla, another Saxon prince, having conquered Lancashire, and the greater part of Yorkshire, received the appellation of king of Deïri [c]. These two kingdoms were united in the Person of Ethilfrid, grandson of Ida, who married Acca, the daughter of Ælla; and expelling her brother Edwin, established one of the most powerful of the Saxon kingdoms by the title of Northumberland. How far his dominions extended into the country now called Scotland, is uncertain; but it cannot be doubted that all the lowlands, especially the east coast of that country, were peopled in a great measure from Germany; though the expeditions, made by the several Saxon adventurers, have escaped the records of history. The language spoken in those countries, which is purely Saxon, is a stronger proof of this event, than can be opposed by the imperfect, or rather fabulous annals, which are obtruded on us by the Scottish historians.

The HEPTARCHY.

THUS was established, after a violent contest of near a hundred and fifty years, the Heptarchy, or seven Saxon kingdoms, in Britain; and the whole southern part of the island, except Wales and Cornwal, had totally changed its inhabitants, language, customs, and political institutions. The Britons, under the Roman dominion, had made

[c] Ann. Beverl. p. 78.

such

ſuch advances towards arts and civil manners, that they had built twenty-eight conſiderable cities within their province, beſides a great number of villages and country ſeats[d]. But the fierce conquerors, by whom they were now ſubdued, threw every thing back into ancient barbarity; and thoſe few natives, who were not either maſſacred or expelled their habitations, were reduced to the moſt abject ſlavery. None of the other northern conquerors, the Franks, Goths, Vandals, or Burgundians, though they over-ran the ſouthern provinces of the empire like a mighty torrent, made ſuch devaſtations in the conquered territories, or were inflamed into ſo violent an animoſity againſt the ancient inhabitants. As the Saxons came over at intervals in ſeparate bodies, the Britons, however at firſt unwarlike, were tempted to make reſiſtance; and hoſtilities being thereby prolonged, proved more deſtructive to both parties, eſpecially to the vanquiſhed. The firſt invaders from Germany, inſtead of excluding other adventurers, who muſt ſhare with them the ſpoils of the ancient inhabitants, were obliged to ſolicit freſh ſupplies from their own country; and a total extermination of the Britons became the ſole expedient for providing a ſettlement and ſubſiſtence to the new planters. Hence there have been found in hiſtory few conqueſts more ruinous than that of the Saxons; and few revolutions more violent than that which they introduced.

So long as the conteſt was maintained with the natives, the ſeveral Saxon princes preſerved a union of counſels and intereſts; but after the Britons were ſhut up in the barren counties of Cornwal and Wales, and gave no farther diſturbance to the conquerors, the band of alliance was in a great meaſure diſſolved among the princes of the Heptarchy. Though one prince ſeems ſtill to have been allowed,

[d] Gildas, Bede, lib. 1.

or

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or to have aſſumed an aſcendant over the whole, his authority, if it ought ever to be deemed regular or legal, was extremely limited; and each ſtate acted as if it had been independent, and wholly ſeparate from the reſt. Wars, therefore, and revolutions and diſſenſions were unavoidable among a turbulent and military people; and theſe events, however intricate or confuſed, ought now to become the objects of our attention. But, added to the difficulty of carrying on at once the hiſtory of ſeven independent kingdoms, there is great diſcouragement to a writer, ariſing from the uncertainty, at leaſt barrenneſs, of the accounts tranſmitted to us. The monks, who were the only annaliſts during thoſe ages, lived remote from publick affairs, conſidered the civil tranſactions as entirely ſubordinate to the eccleſiaſtical, and, beſides partaking of the ignorance and barbarity which were then univerſal, were ſtrongly infected with credulity, with the love of wonder, and with a propenſity to impoſture; vices almoſt inſeparable from their profeſſion and manner of life. The hiſtory of that period abounds in names, but is extremely barren of events; or the events are related ſo much without circumſtances and cauſes, that the moſt profound or moſt eloquent writer muſt deſpair of rendering them either inſtructive or entertaining to the reader. Even the great learning and vigorous imagination of Milton ſunk under the weight; and this author ſcruples not to declare, that the ſkirmiſhes of kites or crows as much merited a particular narrative, as the confuſed tranſactions and battles of the Saxon Heptarchy[c]. In order, however, to connect the events in ſome tolerable meaſure, we ſhall give a ſuccinct account of the ſucceſſions of kings, and of the more remarkable revolutions in each particular kingdom; beginning with that of Kent, which was the firſt eſtabliſhed.

[c] Milton in Kennet, p 50.

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The Kingdom of KENT.

ESCUS ſucceeded his father, Hengiſt, in the kingdom of Kent; but ſeems not to have poſſeſſed the military genius of that conqueror, who firſt made way for the entrance of the Saxon arms into Britain. All the Saxons, who ſought either the fame of valour, or new eſtabliſhments by arms, flocked to the ſtandard of Ælla, king of Suſſex, who was carrying on ſucceſsful war againſt the Britons, and laying the foundations of a new kingdom. Eſcus was content to poſſeſs in tranquillity the kingdom of Kent, which he left in 512 to his ſon Octa, in whoſe time the Eaſt-Saxons eſtabliſhed their monarchy, and diſmembered the provinces of Eſſex and Middleſex from that of Kent. His death, after a reign of twenty-two years, made room for his ſon Hermenric in 534, who performed nothing memorable during a reign of thirty-two years, except aſſociating with him his ſon Ethelbert in the government, that he might ſecure the ſucceſſion in his family, and prevent ſuch revolutions as are incident to a turbulent and barbarous monarchy.

ETHELBERT revived the reputation of his family, which had languiſhed for ſome generations. The inactivity of his predeceſſors, and the ſituation of his country, ſecured from all hoſtility with the Britons, ſeem to have much enfeebled the warlike genius of the Kentiſh Saxons; and Ethelbert, in his firſt attempt to aggrandize his country, and diſtinguiſh his own name, was unſucceſsful[f]. He was twice diſcomfited in battle by Ceaulin, king of Weſſex; and obliged to yield the ſuperiority in the Heptarchy to that ambitious monarch, who preſerved no moderation in his victory, and by reducing the kingdom of Suſſex to ſubjection, excited jealouſy in all the

[f] Chron. Sax. p. 21.

other

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other princes. An aſſociation was formed againſt him; and Ethelbert, intruſted with the command of the allies, gave him battle, and obtained a deciſive victory [g]. Ceaulin died ſoon after; and Ethelbert ſucceeded as well to his aſcendant among the Saxon ſtates, as to his other ambitious projects. He reduced all the princes, except the king of Northumberland, to a ſtrict dependance upon him; and even eſtabliſhed himſelf by force on the throne of Mercia, the moſt extenſive of the Saxon kingdoms. Apprehenſive, however, of a dangerous league againſt him, like that by which he himſelf had been enabled to overthrow Ceaulin, he had the prudence to reſign the kingdom of Mercia to Webba, the rightful heir, the ſon of Crida, who had firſt founded that monarchy. But governed ſtill by ambition more than by juſtice, he gave Webba poſſeſſion of the crown on ſuch conditions, as rendered him little better than a tributary prince under his artful benefactor.

But the moſt memorable event which diſtinguiſhed the reign of this great prince, was the introduction of the Chriſtian religion among the Engliſh Saxons. The ſuperſtition of the Germans, particularly that of the Saxons, was of the groſſeſt and moſt barbarous kind; and being founded on traditional tales received from their anceſtors, not reduced to any ſyſtem, not ſupported by political inſtitutions like that of the Druids, it ſeems to have made little impreſſion on its votaries, and to have eaſily reſigned its place to the new doctrine promulgated to them. Woden, whom they deemed the anceſtor of all their princes, was regarded as the god of war, and by a natural conſequence, became their ſupreme deity, and the chief object of their religious worſhip. They believed, that if they obtained the favour of this divinity by their valour (for

g H. Hunting. lib. 2.

they

they made less account of the other virtues), they should be admitted after their death into his hall; and reposing on couches, should satiate themselves with ale from the skulls of their enemies whom they had slain in battle. Incited by this idea of paradise, which gratified at once the passion of revenge and that of intemperance, the ruling inclinations of barbarians, they despised the dangers of war, and increased their native ferocity against the vanquished by their religious prejudices. We know little of the other theological tenets of the Saxons: We only learn that they were polytheists; that they worshipped the sun and moon; that they adored the god of thunder, under the name of Thor; that they had images in their temples; that they practised sacrifices; believed firmly in spells and inchantments; and admitted in general a system of doctrines which they held as sacred, but which, like all other superstitions, must carry the air of the wildest extravagance, if propounded to those who are not familiarized to it from their earliest infancy.

THE constant hostilities which the Saxons maintained against the Britons, would naturally indispose them for receiving the Christian faith, when preached to them by such inveterate enemies; and perhaps the Britons, as is objected to them by Gildas and Bede, were not overfond of communicating to their cruel invaders the doctrine of eternal life and salvation. But as a civilized people, however subdued by arms, still maintain a sensible superiority over barbarous and ignorant nations, all the other northern conquerors of Europe had been already induced to embrace the Christian faith, which they found established in the empire; and it was impossible but the Saxons, informed of this event, must have regarded with some degree of veneration a doctrine, which had acquired the ascendant over all their brethren. However limited in their views, they could not but have perceived a degree of cultivation

tivation in the southern countries beyond what they themselves possessed; and it was natural for them to yield to that superior knowledge, as well as zeal, by which the inhabitants of the Christian kingdoms were even at that time distinguished.

BUT these causes might long have failed of producing any considerable effect, had not a favourable incident prepared the means of introducing Christianity into Kent. Ethelbert, in his father's lifetime, had married Bertha, the only daughter of Caribert, king of Paris[h], one of the descendants of Clovis, the conqueror of Gaul; but before he was admitted to this alliance, he was obliged to stipulate, that the princess should enjoy the free exercise of her religion; a concession not difficult to be obtained from the idolatrous Saxons[i]. Bertha brought over a French bishop to the court of Canterbury; and being zealous for the propagation of her religion, she had been very assiduous in her devotional exercises, had supported the credit of her faith by an irreproachable conduct, and had employed every art of insinuation and address to reconcile her husband to her religious principles. Her popularity in the court, and her influence over Ethelbert, had so well paved the way for the reception of the Christian doctrine, that Gregory, sirnamed the Great, then Roman pontiff, began to entertain hopes of effecting a project, which he himself, before he mounted the papal throne, had once embraced, of converting the British Saxons.

IT happened, that this prelate, at that time in a private station, had observed in the market-place of Rome, some Saxon youth exposed to sale, whom the Roman merchants, in their trading voyages to Britain, had bought of their mercenary parents. Struck with the beauty of their fair complexions and blooming countenances, Gregory asked to what country

h Greg. of Tours, lib. 9. cap. 26. H. Hunting. lib. 2.
i Bede, lib. 1. cap. 25. Brompton, p. 729.

they belonged; and being told they were *Angles*, he replied, that they ought more properly to be denominated *angels*: It were a pity that the Prince of Darkneſs ſhould enjoy ſo fair a prey, and that ſo beautiful a frontiſpiece ſhould cover a mind deſtitute of internal grace and righteouſneſs. Enquiring farther concerning the name of their province, he was informed, that it was Deïri, a diſtrict of Northumberland: *Deïri!* replied he, *that is good! They are called to the mercy of God from his anger*, De ira. *But what is the name of the king of that province?* He was told it was *Ælla* or *Alla*: *Alleluia*, cried he: *We muſt endeavour that the praiſes of God be ſung in their country.* Moved by theſe alluſions, which appeared to him ſo happy, he determined to undertake, himſelf, a miſſion into Britain; and having obtained the Pope's approbation, he prepared for that perilous journey: But his popularity at home was ſo great, that the Romans, unwilling to expoſe him to ſuch dangers, oppoſed his deſign; and he was obliged, for the preſent, to lay aſide all farther thoughts of executing that pious purpoſe[k].

The controverſy between the Pagans and the Chriſtians was not entirely cooled in that age; and no pontiff, before Gregory, had ever carried to greater exceſs an intemperate zeal againſt the former religion. He had waged war with all the precious monuments of the ancients, and even with their writings; which, as appears from the ſtrain of his own wit, as well as from the ſtyle of his compoſitions, he had not taſte or genius ſufficient to comprehend. Ambitious to diſtinguiſh his pontificate by the converſion of the Britiſh Saxons, he pitched on Auguſtine, a Roman monk, and ſent him with forty aſſociates to preach the goſpel in this iſland. Theſe miſſionaries, terrified with the dangers which might

[k] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 1. Spell. Conc. p. 91.

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attend their propoſing a new doctrine to ſo fierce a people, of whoſe language they were ignorant, ſtopped ſome time in France, and ſent back Auguſtine to lay the hazards and difficulties before the Pope, and crave his permiſſion to deſiſt from the undertaking. But Gregory exhorted them to perſevere in their purpoſe, adviſed them to chuſe ſome interpreters from among the Franks, who ſtill ſpoke the ſame language with the Saxons [l]; and recommending them to the good offices of queen Brunehaut, who had at this time uſurped the ſovereign power in France. This princeſs, though ſtained with every vice of treachery and cruelty, either poſſeſſed or pretended great zeal for the cauſe; and Gregory acknowledged that to her friendly aſſiſtance was, in a great meaſure, owing the ſucceſs of that undertaking [m].

Augustine, on his arrival in Kent, in the year 597 [n], found the danger much leſs than he had apprehended. Ethelbert, already well-diſpoſed towards the Chriſtian faith, aſſigned him a habitation in the iſle of Thanet; and ſoon after admitted him to a conference. Apprehenſive, however, leſt ſpells or enchantments might be employed againſt him by prieſts, who brought an unknown worſhip from a diſtant country, he had the precaution to receive them in the open air, where he believed the force of their magic would be more eaſily diſſipated [o]. Here Auguſtine, by means of his interpreters, delivered to him the tenets of the Chriſtian faith, and promiſed him eternal joys above, and a kingdom in heaven without end, if he would be perſuaded to receive that ſalutary doctrine. "[p] Your words and "promiſes," replied Ethelbert, "are fair; but be-

[l] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 23. [m] Greg. Epiſt. lib. 9. epiſt. 56. Spell. Conc. p. 82. [n] Higden. Polychron. lib. 5. Chron. Sax. p. 23. [o] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 25. H. Hunting. lib. 3. Brompton. p 729. Parker Antiq. Brit. Eccl. p. 61. [p] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 25. Chron. W. Thorn. p. 1759.

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"cause they are new and uncertain, I cannot en-"
"tirely yield to them, and relinquish the principles"
"which I and my ancestors have so long main-"
"tained. You are welcome, however, to remain"
"here in peace; and as you have undertaken so"
"long a journey, solely, as it appears, for what"
"you believe to be for our advantage, I will supply"
"you with all necessaries, and permit you to deliver"
"your doctrine to my subjects[q]."

AUGUSTINE, encouraged by this favourable reception, and seeing now a prospect of success, proceeded with redoubled zeal to preach the gospel to the Kentish Saxons. He attracted their attention by the austerity of his manners, by the severe penances to which he subjected himself, by the abstinence and self-denial which he practised: And having excited their wonder, by a course of life which appeared so contrary to nature, he procured more easily their belief of miracles, which, it was pretended, he wrought for their conversion[r]. Influenced by these motives, and by the declared favour of the court, numbers of the Kentish men were baptized; and the King himself was persuaded to submit to that rite of Christianity. His example had great influence with his subjects; but he employed no force to bring them over to the new doctrine. Augustine thought proper, in the commencement of his mission, to assume the appearance of the greatest lenity: He told Ethelbert, that the service of Christ must be entirely voluntary, and that no violence ought ever to be used in propagating so salutary a doctrine[s].

THE intelligence received of these spiritual conquests afforded great joy to the Romans; who now exulted as much in those peaceful trophies, as their ancestors had ever done in their most sanguinary triumphs, and most splendid victories. Gregory

[q] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 25. H. Hunting. lib. 3. Brompton, p. 729.
[r] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 26. [s] Ibid. cap. 26. H. Hunting. lib. 3.

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wrote a letter to Ethelbert, in which, after informing him that the end of the world was approaching, he exhorted him to display his zeal in the conversion of his subjects, to exert rigour against the worship of idols, and to build up the good work of holiness, by every expedient of exhortation, terror, blandishment, or correction [t]: A doctrine more suitable to that age, and to the usual papal maxims, than the tolerating principles which Augustine had thought it prudent to inculcate. The pontiff also answered some questions, which the missionary had put concerning the government of the new church of Kent. Besides other queries, which it is not material here to relate, Augustine asked, *Whether cousin-germans might be allowed to marry?* Gregory answered, that that liberty had indeed been formerly granted by the Roman law; but that experience had shewn, that no issue could ever come from such marriages; and he therefore prohibited them. Augustine asked, *Whether a woman pregnant might be baptised?* Gregory answered, that he saw no objection. *How soon after the birth the child might receive baptism?* It was answered, Immediately, if necessary. *How soon a husband might have commerce with his wife after her delivery?* Not till she had given suck to her child; a practice to which Gregory exhorts all women. *How soon a man might enter the church, or receive the sacrament, after having had commerce with his wife?* It was replied, that, unless he had approached her without desire, merely for the sake of propagating his species, he was not without sin: But in all cases it was requisite for him, before he entered the church, or communicated, to purge himself by prayer and ablution; and he ought not, even after using these precautions, to participate immediately of the sacred duties [u]. There are some other questions and replies still more indecent and more ridiculous.

[t] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 32. Brompton, p. 732. Spell. Conc. p. 86.
[u] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 27. Spell. Conc. p. 97, 98, 99, &c.

culous[w]. And, on the whole, it appears that Gregory and his miſſionary, if ſympathy of manners have any influence, were better calculated, than men of more refined underſtandings, for making a progreſs with the ignorant and barbarous Saxons.

The more to facilitate the reception of Chriſtianity, Gregory enjoined Auguſtine to remove the idols from the Heathen altars, but not to deſtroy the altars themſelves; becauſe the people, he ſaid, would be allured to frequent the Chriſtian worſhip, when they found it celebrated in a place which they were accuſtomed to revere. And as the Pagans practiſed ſacrifices, and feaſted with the prieſts on their offerings, he alſo exhorted the miſſionary to perſuade them, on Chriſtian feſtivals, to kill their cattle in the neighbourhood of the church, and to indulge themſelves in thoſe cheerful entertainments to which they had been habituated[x]. Theſe political compliances ſhew, that notwithſtanding his ignorance and prejudices, he was not unacquainted with the arts of governing mankind. Auguſtine was conſecrated archbiſhop of Canterbury, was endowed by Gregory with authority over all the Britiſh churches, and received the pall, a badge of eccleſiaſtical honour, from Rome[y]. Gregory alſo adviſed him not to be too much elated with his gift of working miracles[z]; and as Auguſtine, proud with the ſucceſs of his miſſion, ſeemed to think himſelf entitled to extend his authority over the biſhops of Gaul, the Pope informed

[w] Auguſtine aſks, *Si mulier menſtrua conſuetudine tenetur, an eccleſiam intrare ei licet, aut ſacræ communionis ſacramenta percipere?* Gregory anſwers, *Santæ communionis myſterium in eiſdem diebus percipere non debet prohiberi. Si autem ex veneratione magna percipere non præſumitur, laudanda eſt.* Auguſtine aſks, *Si poſt illuſionem, quæ per ſomnum ſolet accidere, vel corpus Domini quilibet accipere valeat; vel, ſi ſacerdos ſit, ſacra myſteria celebrare?* Gregory anſwers this learned queſtion by many learned diſtinctions.

[x] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 30. Spell. Conc. p. 89. Greg. Epiſt. lib. 9. epiſt. 71. [y] Chron. Sax. p. 23, 24. [z] H. Hunting. lib. 3. Spell. Conc. p. 83. Bede, lib. 1. Greg. Epiſt. lib. 9. epiſt. 60.

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him, that they lay entirely without the bounds of his jurisdiction [a].

The marriage of Ethelbert with Bertha, and much more his embracing Christianity, begat a connexion of his subjects with the French, Italians, and other nations on the continent, and tended to reclaim them from their gross ignorance and barbarity in which all the Saxon tribes had been hitherto involved [b]. Ethelbert also enacted [c], with the consent of the states of his kingdom, a body of laws, the first written laws promulgated by any of the northern conquerors; and his reign was in every respect glorious to himself and beneficial to his people. He governed the kingdom of Kent fifty years; and dying in 616, left the succession to his son, Eadbald. This prince, seduced by a passion for his mother-in-law, deserted for some time the Christian faith, which permitted not these incestuous marriages: His whole people immediately returned with him to idolatry. Laurentius, the successor of Augustine, found the Christian worship wholly abandoned, and was prepared to return to France, in order to escape the mortification of preaching the gospel without fruit to the infidels. Mellitus and Justus, who had been consecrated bishops of London and Rochester, had already departed the kingdom [d]; when Laurentius, before he should entirely abandon his dignity, made one effort to reclaim the King. He appeared before that prince; and throwing off his vestments, showed his body all torn with bruises and stripes, which he had received. Eadbald, wondering that any man should have dared to treat in that manner a person of his rank, was told by Laurentius, that he had received this chastisement from St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, who had appeared to him in a vision, and severely reproving him for his intention to desert his

[a] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 27. [b] Will. Malm. p. 10. [c] Wilkins Leges Sax. p. 13. [d] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 5.

charge,

charge, had inflicted on him these visible marks of his displeasure [e]. Whether Eadbald was struck with the miracle, or influenced by some other motive, he divorced himself from his mother-in law, and returned to the profession of Christianity [f]: His whole people returned with him. Eadbald reached not the fame or authority of his father, and died in 640, after a reign of twenty-five years; leaving two sons, Erminfrid and Ercombert.

ERCOMBERT, though the younger son, by Emma, a French princess, found means to mount the throne. He is celebrated by Bede for two exploits, for establishing the fast of Lent in his kingdom, and for utterly extirpating idolatry; which, notwithstanding the prevalence of Christianity, had hitherto been tolerated by the two preceding monarchs. He reigned twenty-four years; and left the crown to Egbert his son, who reigned nine years. This prince is renowned for his encouragement of learning; but infamous for putting to death his two cousin-germans, sons of Erminfrid, his uncle. The ecclesiastical writers praise him for his bestowing on his sister, Domnona, some lands in the isle of Thanet, where she founded a monastery.

THE bloody precaution of Egbert could not fix the crown on the head of his son Edric. Lothaire, brother of the deceased prince, took possession of the kingdom; and, in order to secure the power in his family, he associated with him Richard, his son, in the administration of the government. Edric, the dispossessed prince, had recourse to Edilwach, king of Sussex, for assistance; and being supported by that prince, fought a battle with his uncle, who was defeated and slain. Richard fled into Germany, and afterwards died in Lucca, a city of Tuscany. William of Malmesbury ascribes Lothaire's bad fortune to two crimes, his concurrence in the murder of his cousins, and his contempt for reliques [g].

[e] Bede, cap. 6. Chron. Sax. p. 26. Higden, lib. 5.
[f] Brompton, p. 739. [g] Will. Malm. p. 11.

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Lothaire reigned eleven years; Edric his successor, only two. Upon the death of the latter, which happened in 686, Widred, his brother, obtained possession of the crown. But as the succession had been of late so much disjointed by revolutions and usurpations, faction began to prevail among the nobility; which invited Cedwalla, king of Wessex, with his brother Mollo, to attack the kingdom. These invaders committed great devastations in Kent; but the death of Mollo, who was slain in a skirmish[h], gave a short breathing-time to that kingdom. Widred restored the affairs of Kent; and, after a reign of thirty-two years[i], left the crown to his posterity. Eadbert, Ethelbert, and Alric, his descendants, successively mounted the throne. After the death of the last, which happened in 794, the royal family of Kent was extinguished; and every factious leader who could entertain hopes of ascending the throne, threw the state into confusion. [k]Egbert who first succeeded, reigned but two years; Cuthred, brother to the king of Mercia, six years; Baldred, an illegitimate branch of the royal family, eighteen: And after a troublesome and precarious reign, he was, in the year 723, expelled by Egbert, king of Wessex, who dissolved the Saxon Heptarchy, and united the several kingdoms under his dominion.

The Kingdom of NORTHUMBERLAND.

Adelfrid, king of Bernicia, having married Acca, the daughter of Ælla, king of Deïri, and expelled her infant brother, Edwin, had united all the counties north of Humber into one monarchy, and acquired a great ascendant in the Heptarchy. He also spread the terror of the Saxon arms to the neighbouring people; and by his vic-

[h] Higden, lib. 5. [i] Chron. Sax. p. 52.
[k] Will. Malmesf. lib. 1. cap. 1. p. 11.

tories

tories over the Scots and Picts, as well as Welsh, extended on all sides the bounds of his dominions. Having laid siege to Chester, the Britons marched out with all their forces to engage him; and they were attended by a body of 1250 monks from the monastery of Bangor, who stood at a small distance from the field of battle, in order to encourage the combatants by their presence and exhortations. Adelfrid enquiring the purpose of this unusual appearance, was told, that these priests had come to pray against him: *Then are they as much our enemies*, said he, *as those who intend to fight against us* [l]: And he immediately sent a detachment, who fell upon them, and did such execution, that only fifty escaped with their lives [m]. The Britons, astonished at this event, received a total defeat: Chester was obliged to surrender: And Adelfrid, pursuing his victory, made himself master of Bangor, and entirely demolished the monastery; a building so extensive, that there was a mile's distance from one gate of it to another, and it contained two thousand one hundred monks, who are said to have been there maintained by their own labour [n].

NOTWITHSTANDING Adelfrid's success in war, he lived in inquietude on account of young Edwin, whom he had unjustly dispossessed of the crown of Deïri. This prince, now grown to man's estate, wandered from place to place in continual danger from the attempts of Adelfrid; and received at last protection in the court of Redwald, king of the East-Angles; where his engaging and gallant deportment procured him general esteem and affection. Redwald, however, was strongly solicited by the king of Northumberland to kill or deliver up his guest: Rich presents were promised him if he would comply; and war denounced against him in case of his refusal. After rejecting several messages of this

[l] Brompton, p. 779. [m] Trivet, apud Spell. Conc. p. 111.
[n] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 2. W. Malmes. lib. 1. cap. 3.

kind,

kind, his generosity began to yield to the motives of interest; and he retained the last ambassador, till he should come to a resolution in a case of such importance. Edwin, informed of his friend's perplexity, was yet determined at all hazards to remain in East-Anglia; and thought, that if the protection of that court failed him, it were better to die, than prolong a life so much exposed to the persecutions of his powerful rival. This confidence in Redwald's honour and friendship, with his other accomplishments, engaged the queen on his side; and she effectually represented to her husband the infamy of delivering up to certain destruction their royal guest, who had fled to them for protection against his cruel and jealous enemies [o]. Redwald, embracing more generous resolutions, thought it safest to prevent Adelfrid, before that prince was aware of his intention, and to attack him while he was yet unprepared for defence. He marched suddenly with an army into the kingdom of Northumberland, and fought a battle with Adelfrid; in which that monarch was defeated and killed, after avenging himself by the death of Regner, son of Redwald [p]. His own sons, Eanfrid, Oswald, and Oswy, yet infants, were carried into Scotland; and Edwin obtained possession of the crown of Northumberland.

Edwin was the greatest prince of the Heptarchy in that age, and distinguished himself, both by his influence over the other kingdoms [q], and by the strict execution of justice in his own dominions. He reclaimed his subjects from the licentious life to which they had been accustomed; and it was a common saying, that during his reign a woman or child might openly carry every where a purse of gold, without any danger of violence or robbery. There is a remarkable instance, transmitted to us,

[o] W. Malmes. lib. 1. cap. 3. H. Hunting. lib. 3. Bede.
[p] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 12. Brompton, p. 781.
[q] Chron. Sax. p. 27.

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of the affection borne him by his servants. Cuichelme, king of Wessex, was his enemy; but finding himself unable to maintain open war against so gallant and powerful a prince, he determined to use treachery against him, and he employed one Eumer for that criminal purpose. The assassin having obtained admittance, by pretending to deliver a message from Cuichelme, drew his dagger, and rushed upon the king. Lilla, an officer of his army, seeing his master's danger, and having no other means of defence, interposed with his own body between the king and Eumer's dagger, which was pushed with such violence, that, after piercing Lilla, it even wounded Edwin: But before the assassin could renew his blow, he was dispatched by the king's attendants.

The East-Angles conspired against Redwald, their king; and having put him to death, they offered their crown to Edwin, of whose valour and capacity they had had experience, while he resided among them. But Edwin, from a sense of gratitude towards his benefactor, obliged them to submit to Earpwold, the son of Redwald; and that prince preserved his authority, though on a precarious footing, under the protection of the Northumbrian monarch [r].

Edwin, after his accession to the crown, married Ethelburga, the daughter of Ethelbert, King of Kent. This princess, emulating the glory of her mother Bertha, who had been the instrument for converting her husband and his people to Christianity, carried Paullinus, a learned bishop, along with her [s]; and besides stipulating a toleration for the exercise of her own religion, which was readily granted her, she used every reason to persuade the king to embrace it. Edwin, like a prudent prince, hesitated on the proposal; but promised to examine

[r] Gul. Malmes. lib. 1. cap. 3. [s] H. Hunting. lib. 3.

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the foundations of that doctrine; and declared, that if he found them satisfactory, he was willing to be converted [t]. Accordingly he held several conferences with Paullinus; canvassed the arguments propounded with the wisest of his counsellors; retired frequently from company, in order to revolve alone that important question; and, after a serious and long enquiry, declared in favour of the Christian religion [u]: The people soon after imitated his example. Besides the authority and influence of the king, they were moved by another striking example. Coifi, the high-priest, being converted after a public conference with Paullinus, led the way in destroying the images, which he had so long worshipped, and was forward in making this atonement for his past idolatry [w].

This able prince perished with his son, Osfrid, in a great battle which he fought against Penda, king of Mercia, and Cædwalla, king of the Britons [x]. That event, which happened in the forty-eighth year of Edwin's age and seventeenth of his reign [y], divided the monarchy of Northumberland, which that prince had united in his person. Eanfrid, the son of Adelfrid, returned with his brothers, Oswald and Oswy, from Scotland, and took possession of Bernicia, his paternal kingdom: Osric, Edwin's cousin-german, established himself in Deïri, the inheritance of his family; but to which the sons of Edwin had a preferable title. Eanfrid, the elder surviving son, fled to Penda, by whom he was treacherously slain. The younger son, Vuscfræa, with Yffi, the grandson of Edwin, by Osfrid, sought protection in Kent, and not finding themselves in safety there, retired into France to king Dagobert, where they died [z].

[t] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 9. [u] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 9. Malmes. lib. 1. cap. 3. [w] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 13. Brompton, Higden. lib. 5. [x] Math. West. p. 114. Chron. Sax. p. 29. [y] W. Malmes. lib. 1. cap. 3. [z] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 20.

OSRIC,

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Osric, king of Deïri, and Eanfrid of Bernicia, returned to paganiſm; and the whole people ſeem to have returned with them; ſince Paullinus, who was the firſt archbiſhop of York, and who had converted them, thought proper to retire with Ethelburga, the Queen Dowager, into Kent. Both theſe Northumbrian kings periſhed ſoon after, the firſt in battle againſt Cædwalla, the Briton; the ſecond, by the treachery of that prince. Oſwald, the brother of Eanfrid of the race of Bernicia, united again the kingdom of Northumberland in the year 634, and reſtored the Chriſtian religion in his dominions. He gained a bloody and well-diſputed battle againſt Cædwalla; the laſt vigorous effort which the Britons made againſt the Saxons. Oſwald is much celebrated for his ſanctity and charity by the Monkiſh hiſtorians; and they pretend, that his reliques wrought miracles, particularly the curing of a ſick horſe, which had approached the place of his interment [a].

He died in battle againſt Penda, king of Mercia, and was ſucceeded by his brother Oſwy; who eſtabliſhed himſelf in the government of the whole Northumbrian kingdom, by putting to death Oſwin, the ſon of Oſric, the laſt king of the race of Deïri. His ſon Egfrid ſucceeded him; who periſhed in battle againſt the Picts, without leaving any children, becauſe Adelthrid, his wife, refuſed to violate her vow of chaſtity. Alfred, his natural brother, acquired poſſeſſion of the kingdom, which he governed for nineteen years; and he left it to Oſred, his ſon, a boy of eight years of age. This prince, after a reign of eleven years, was murdered by Kenred his kinſman, who, after enjoying the crown only a year, periſhed by a like fate. Oſric, and after him Celwulph the ſon of Kenred, next mounted the throne, which the latter relinquiſhed in the year

[a] Bede, lib. 3. cap. 9.

738,

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738, in favour of Eadbert his coufin-german, who, imitating his predeceffor, abdicated the crown, and retired into a monaftery. Ofwolf, fon of Eadbert, was flain in a fedition, a year after his acceffion to the crown; and Mollo, who was not of the royal family, feized the crown. He perifhed by the treachery of Ailred, a prince of the blood; and Ailred, having fucceeded in his defign upon the throne, was foon after expelled by his fubjects. Ethelred, his fucceffor, the fon of Mollo, underwent a like fate. Celwold, the next king, the brother of Ailred, was depofed and flain by the people, and his place was filled by Ofred, his nephew, who, after a fhort reign of a year, made way for Ethelbert, another fon of Mollo, whofe death was equally tragical with that of almoft all his predeceffors. After Ethelbert's death an univerfal anarchy prevailed in Northumberland; and the people having, by fo many fatal revolutions, loft all attachment to their government and princes, were well prepared for fubjection to a foreign yoke; which Egbert, king of Weffex, finally impofed upon them.

The Kingdom of EAST-ANGLIA.

THE hiftory of this kingdom contains nothing memorable, except the converfion of Earpwold, the fourth king, and great-grandfon of Uffa, the founder of the monarchy. The authority of Edwin, king of Northumberland, on whom that prince entirely depended, engaged him to take this ftep: But foon after, his wife, who was an idolatrefs, brought him back to her religion; and he was found unable to refift thofe allurements which had feduced the wifeft of mankind. After his death, which was violent, like that of moft of the Saxon princes that did not early retire into monafteries, Sigebert, his fucceffor, and half-brother, who had been educated in France, reftored Chriftianity,

tianity, and introduced learning among the East-Angles. Some pretend that he founded the university of Cambridge, or rather some schools in that place. It is almost impossible, and quite needless, to be more particular in relating the transactions of the East-Angles. What instruction or entertainment can it give the reader, to hear a long bead-roll of barbarous names, Egric, Annas, Ethelbert, Ethelwald, Aldulf, Elfwold, Beorne, Ethelred, Ethelbert, who successively murdered, expelled, or inherited from each other, and obscurely filled the throne of that kingdom? Ethelbert, the last of these princes, was treacherously murdered by Offa, king of Mercia, in the year 792, and his state was thenceforth united with that of Offa, as we shall relate presently.

The Kingdom of MERCIA.

MERCIA, the largest, if not the most powerful, kingdom of the Heptarchy, comprehended all the middle counties of England; and as its frontiers extended to those of all the other six kingdoms, as well as to Wales, it received its name from that circumstance. Wibba, the son of Crida, founder of the monarchy, being placed on the throne by Ethelbert, king of Kent, governed his paternal dominions by a precarious authority; and after his death, Ceorl, his kinsman, was, by the influence of the Kentish monarch, preferred to his son Penda, whose turbulent character appeared dangerous to that prince. Penda was thus fifty years of age before he mounted the throne; and his temerity and restless disposition were found nowise abated by time, experience, or reflection. He engaged in continual hostilities against all the neighbouring states; and, by his injustice and violence, rendered himself equally odious to his own subjects and to strangers. Sigebert, Egric, and Annas,

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three kings of Eaſt-Anglia, periſhed ſucceſſively in battle againſt him; as did alſo Edwin and Oſwald, the two greateſt princes that had reigned over Northumberland. At laſt, Oſwy, brother to Oſwald, having defeated and ſlain him in a deciſive battle, freed the world from this ſanguinary tyrant. Peada, his ſon, mounted the throne of Mercia in 655, and lived under the protection of Oſwy, whoſe daughter he had eſpouſed. This princeſs was educated in the Chriſtian faith, and ſhe employed her influence with ſucceſs, in converting her huſband and his ſubjects to that religion. Thus the fair-ſex have had the merit of introducing the Chriſtian doctrine into all the moſt conſiderable kingdoms of the Saxon Heptarchy. Peada died a violent death[b]. His ſon, Wolfhere, ſucceeded to the government; and, after having reduced to dependence the kingdoms of Eſſex and Eaſt-Anglia, he left the crown to his brother Ethelred, who, though a lover of peace, ſhowed himſelf not unfit for military enterprizes. Beſides making a ſucceſsful expedition into Kent, he repulſed Egfrid, king of Northumberland, who had invaded his dominions; and he ſlew in battle Elfwin, the brother of that prince. Deſirous, however, of compoſing all animoſities with Egfrid, he paid him a ſum of money as a compenſation for the loſs of his brother. After a proſperous reign of thirty years, he reſigned the crown to Kendred, ſon of Wolfhere, and retired into the monaſtery of Bardney[c]. Kendred returned the preſent of the crown to Ceolred, the ſon of Ethelred; and making a pilgrimage to Rome, paſſed his life there in penance and devotion. The place of Ceolred was ſupplied by Ethelbald, great-grand-nephew to Penda, by Alwy, his brother; and this prince, being ſlain

[b] Hugo Candidus, p. 4. ſays, that he was treacherouſly murdered by his queen, by whoſe perſuaſion he had embraced Chriſtianity; but this account of the matter is found in that hiſtorian alone.

[c] Bede, lib. 5.

in

in a mutiny, was ſucceeded by Offa, who was a degree more remote from Penda, by Eawa, another brother. CHAP. I.

THIS prince, who mounted the throne in 755 [d], had ſome great qualities, and was ſucceſsful in his warlike enterpriſes againſt Lothaire, king of Kent, and Kenwulph, king of Weſſex. He defeated the former in a bloody battle at Otford upon the Darent, and reduced his kingdom to a ſtate of dependence: He gained a victory over the latter at Benſington in Oxfordſhire; and conquering that county, together with that of Glouceſter, annexed both to his dominions. But all theſe ſucceſſes were ſtained by his treacherous murder of Ethelbert, king of the Eaſt-Angles, and his violent ſeizing of that kingdom. This young prince, who is ſaid to have poſſeſſed great merit, had paid his addreſſes to Elfrida, the daughter of Offa, and was invited with all his retinue to Hereford, in order to ſolemnize the nuptials: Amidſt the joy and feſtivity of theſe entertainments, he was ſeized by Offa, and ſecretly beheaded: And though Elfrida, who abhorred her father's treachery, had time to give warning to the Eaſt-Anglian nobility, who eſcaped into their own country, Offa, having extinguiſhed the royal family, ſucceeded in his deſign of ſubduing that kingdom [e]. The perfidious prince, deſirous of re-eſtabliſhing his character in the world, and perhaps of appeaſing the remorſes of his own conſcience, paid great court to the clergy, and practiſed all the monkiſh devotion ſo much eſteemed in that ignorant and ſuperſtitious age. He gave the tenth of his goods to the church [f]; beſtowed rich donations on the cathedral of Hereford, and even made a pilgrimage to Rome, where his great power and riches could not fail of procuring him the papal abſolution. The better to ingratiate himſelf with the

[d] Chron. Sax. p. 59. [e] Brompton, p. 750, 751, 752.
[f] Spel. Conc. p. 308. Brompton, p. 776.

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sovereign pontiff, he engaged to pay him a yearly donation for the support of an English college at Rome[g], and in order to raise the sum, he imposed the tax of a penny on each house possessed, of thirty pence a year. This imposition, being afterwards levied on all England, was commonly denominated Peter's pence[h]; and though conferred at first as a gift, was afterwards claimed as a tribute by the Roman pontiff. Carrying his hypocrisy still farther, Offa, feigning to be directed by a vision from heaven, discovered at Verulam the reliques of St. Alban, the martyr, and endowed a magnificent monastery in that place[i]. Moved by all these acts of piety, Malmesbury, one of the best of the old English historians, declares himself at a loss to determine[k] whether the merits or crimes of this prince preponderated. Offa died, after a reign of thirty-nine years, in 794[l].

THIS prince was become so considerable in the Heptarchy, that the emperor Charlemagne entered into an alliance and friendship with him; a circumstance which did honour to Offa; as distant princes at that time had usually little communication with each other. That emperor being a great lover of learning and learned men, in an age very barren of that ornament, Offa, at his desire, sent him over Alcuin, a clergyman much celebrated for his knowledge, who received great honours from Charlemagne, and even became his preceptor in the sciences. The chief reason why he had at first desired the company of Alcuin, was, that he might oppose his learning to the heresy of Felix, bishop of Urgil in Catalonia; who maintained, that Jesus Christ, considered in his human nature, could, more properly, be denominated the adoptive, than the natural, son of God[m]. This heresy was condemned

[g] Spel. Conc. p. 230. 310. 312. [h] Higden, lib. 5. [i] Ingulph. p 5. W. Malmes. lib. 1. cap. 4. [k] Lib. 1. cap. 4. [l] Chron. Sax. p. 65. [m] Dupin, cent. 8. chap. 4.

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in the council of Francfort, held in 794, and consisting of 300 bishops. Such were the questions which were agitated in that age, and which employed the attention not only of cloistered scholars, but of the wisest and greatest princes [n].

EGFRITH succeeded to his father Offa, but survived him only five months [o]; when he made way for Kenulph, a descendant of the royal family. This prince waged war against Kent; and taking Egbert the king, prisoner, he cut off his hands, and put out his eyes; leaving Cuthred, his own brother, in possession of the crown of that kingdom. Kenulph was killed in an insurrection of the East-Anglians, whose crown his predecessor, Offa, had usurped. He left his son, Kenelm, a minor; who was murdered the same year by his sister, Quendrade, who had entertained the ambitious views of assuming the government [p]. But she was supplanted by her uncle, Ceolulf; who, two years after, was dethroned by Beornulf. The reign of this usurper, who was not of the royal family, was short and unfortunate: He was defeated by the West-Saxons, and killed by his own subjects, the East-Angles [q]. Ludican, his successor, underwent the same fate [r]; and Wiglaff, who mounted this unstable throne, and found every thing in the utmost confusion, could not withstand the fortune of Egbert, who united all the Saxon kingdoms into one great monarchy.

The Kingdom of ESSEX.

THIS kingdom made no great figure in the Heptarchy; and the history of it is very imperfect. Sleda succeeded to his father, Erkinwin, the founder of the monarchy; and made way for his

[n] Offa, in order to protect his country from Wales, drew a rampart or ditch of a hundred miles in length, from Basingwerke in Flintshire, to the south sea near Bristol. See *Speed's Description of Wales.*

[o] Ingulph. p. 6. [p] Ingulph. p. 7. Brompton, p. 776.

[q] Ingulph. p. 7. [r] Alur. Beverl. p. 87.

son,

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son, Sebert, who, being nephew to Ethelbert, king of Kent, was persuaded by that prince to embrace the Christian faith [s]. His sons and conjunct successors, Sexted and Seward, relapsed into idolatry, and were soon after slain in a battle against the West-Saxons To shew the rude manner of living in that age, Bede tells us [t], that these two kings expressed great desire to eat the white bread, distributed by Mellitus, the bishop, at the communion [u]. But on his refusing them, unless they would submit to be baptized, they expelled him their dominions. The names of the other princes who reigned successively in Essex, are Sigebert the little, Sigebert the good, who restored Christianity, Swithelm, Sigheri, Offa. This last prince having made a vow of chastity, notwithstanding his marriage with Keneswitha, a Mercian princess, daughter to Penda, went in pilgrimage to Rome, and shut himself up during the rest of his life in a cloister. Selred, his successor, reigned thirty-eight years; and was the last of the royal line: The failure of which threw the kingdom into great confusion, and reduced it to dependence under Mercia [w]. Switherd first acquired the crown, by the concession of the Mercian princes; and his death made way for Sigeric, who ended his life in a pilgrimage to Rome. His successor, Sigered, unable to defend his kingdom, submitted to the victorious arms of Egbert.

The Kingdom of SUSSEX.

THE history of this kingdom, the smallest in the Heptarchy, is still more imperfect than that of Essex. Ælla, the founder of the monarchy, left the crown to his son, Cissa, who is chiefly remarkable for his long reign of seventy-six years.

[s] Chron. Sax. p. 24. [t] Lib. 2. cap. 5. [u] H. Hunting. lib. 3. Brompton, p. 738. 743. Bede. [w] Malmes. lib. 1 cap. 6.

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During his time, the South-Saxons fell almoſt into a total dependence on the kingdom of Weſſex; and we ſcarcely know the names of the princes who were poſſeſſed of this titular ſovereignty. Adelwalch, the laſt of them, was ſubdued in battle by Ceadwalla, king of Weſſex, and was ſlain in the action; leaving two infant ſons, who, falling into the hand of the conqueror, were murdered by him. The abbot of Retford oppoſed the order for this execution; but could only prevail on Ceadwalla to ſuſpend it till they ſhould be baptized. Berchthun and Audhun, two noblemen of character, reſiſted ſome time the violence of the Weſt-Saxons; but their oppoſition ſerved only to prolong the miſeries of their country; and the ſubduing of this kingdom was the firſt ſtep which the Weſt-Saxons made towards acquiring the ſole monarchy of England [x].

The Kingdom of WESSEX.

THE kingdom of Weſſex, which finally ſwallowed up all the other Saxon ſtates, met with great reſiſtance on its firſt eſtabliſhment: And the Britons, who were now enured to arms, yielded not tamely their poſſeſſions to thoſe invaders. Cerdic, the founder of the monarchy, and his ſon, Kenric, fought many ſucceſsful and ſome unſucceſsful battles againſt the natives; and the martial ſpirit, common to all the Saxons, was, by means of theſe hoſtilities, carried to the greateſt height among this tribe. Ceaulin, who was the ſon and ſucceſſor of Kenric, and who began his reign in 560, was ſtill more ambitious and enterpriſing than his predeceſſors; and, by waging continual war againſt the Britons, he added a great part of the counties of Devon and Somerſet to his other dominions. Car-

x Brompton, p. 800.

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ried along by the tide of succeſs, he invaded the other Saxon ſtates in his neighbourhood, and becoming terrible to all, he provoked a general confederacy againſt him. This alliance proved ſucceſsful under the conduct of Ethelbert, king of Kent; and Ceaulin, who had loſt the affections of his own ſubjects by his violent diſpoſition, and had now fallen into contempt from his misfortunes, was expelled the throne [y], and died in exile and miſery. Cuichelme and Cuthwin, his ſons, governed jointly the kingdom, till the expulſion of the latter in 591, and the death of the former in 593, made way for Cealric, to whom ſucceeded Ceobald in 593, by whoſe death, which happened in 611, Kynegils inherited the crown. This prince embraced Chriſtianity [z], through the perſuaſion of Oſwald, king of Northumberland, who had married his daughter, and who had attained a great aſcendant in the Heptarchy. Kenwalch next ſucceeded to the monarchy, and dying in 672, left the ſucceſſion ſo much diſputed, that Sexburga, his widow, a woman of ſpirit [a], kept poſſeſſion of the government till her death, which happened two years after. Eſcwin then peaceably acquired the crown; and, after a ſhort reign of two years, made way for Kentwin, who governed nine years. Ceodwalla, his ſucceſſor, mounted not the throne without oppoſition; but proved a great prince, according to the ideas of thoſe times; that is, he was enterpriſing, warlike, and ſucceſsful. He entirely ſubdued the kingdom of Suſſex, and annexed it to his own dominions. He made inroads into Kent; but met with reſiſtance from Widred, the king, who proved ſucceſsful againſt Mollo, brother to Ceodwalla, and ſlew him in a ſkirmiſh. Ceodwalla, at laſt, tired with wars and bloodſhed, was ſeized with a fit of devotion; beſtowed ſeveral endowments on the church; and made a pilgrimage

[y] Chron. Sax. p. 22.
[z] Higden, lib. 5. Chron. Sax. p. 15. Alur. Beverl. p. 94.
[a] Bede, lib. 4. cap. 12. Chron. Sax. p. 41.

to Rome, where he received baptiſm, and died in 689. Ina, his ſucceſſor, inherited the military virtues of Ceodwalla, and added to them the more valuable ones of juſtice, policy, and prudence. He made war upon the Britons in Somerſet; and having finally ſubdued that province, he treated the vanquiſhed with a humanity hitherto unknown to the Saxon conquerors. He allowed the proprietors to retain poſſeſſion of their lands, encouraged marriages and alliances between them and his ancient ſubjects, and gave them the privilege of being governed by the ſame laws. Theſe laws he augmented and aſcertained; and though he was diſturbed by ſome inſurrections at home, his long reign of thirty-ſeven years may be regarded as one of the moſt glorious and moſt proſperous of the Heptarchy. In the decline of his age he made a pilgrimage to Rome; and after his return, ſhut himſelf up in a cloiſter, where he died.

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Though the kings of Weſſex had always been princes of the blood, deſcended from Cerdic, the founder of the monarchy, the order of ſucceſſion had been far from exact; and a more remote prince had often found means to mount the throne, in preference to one deſcended from a nearer branch of the royal family. Ina, therefore, having no children of his own, and lying much under the influence of Ethelburga, his queen, left by will the ſucceſſion to Adelard, her brother, who was his remote kinſman: But this deſtination did not take place without ſome difficulty. Oſwald, a prince more nearly allied to the crown, took arms againſt Adelard; but he being ſuppreſſed, and dying ſoon after, the title of Adelard was not any farther diſputed; and in the year 741, he was ſucceeded by his couſin, Cudred. The reign of this prince was diſtinguiſhed by a great victory which he obtained, by means of Edelhun, his general, over Ethelbald, king of Mercia. His death made way for Sigebert, his kinſman, who go-

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verned so ill, that his people rose in an insurrection, and dethroned him, crowning Cenulph in his stead. The exiled prince found a refuge with duke Cumbran, governor of Hampshire; who, that he might add new obligations to Sigebert, gave him many salutary counsels for his future conduct, accompanied with some reprehensions for the past. But these were so much resented by the ungrateful prince, that he conspired against the life of his protector, and treacherously murdered him. After this infamous action, he was forsaken by all the world; and skulking about in the wilds and forests, was at last discovered by a servant of Cumbran's, who instantly took revenge upon him for the murder of his master[b].

Cenulph, who had obtained the crown on the expulsion of Sigebert, was fortunate in many expeditions against the Britons of Cornwal; but afterwards lost some reputation by his ill success against Offa, king of Mercia[c]. Kynehard also, brother to the deposed Sigebert, gave him disturbance; and though expelled the kingdom, he hovered on the frontiers, and watched an opportunity for attacking his rival. The king had an intrigue with a young woman who lived at Merton in Surry, whither having secretly retired, he was on a sudden invironed, in the night-time, by Kynehard and his followers, and after making a vigorous resistance, was murdered with all his attendants. The nobility and people of the neighbourhood, rising next day in arms, took revenge on Kynehard for the slaughter of their king, and put every one to the sword who had been engaged in that criminal enterprise. This event happened in 784.

Brithric next obtained possession of the government, though remotely descended from the royal family; but he enjoyed not that dignity without in-

[b] Higden, lib. 5. W. Malmesf. lib. 1. cap. 2.

[c] W. Malmesf. lib. 1. cap. 2.

quietude.

quietude. Eoppa, nephew to king Ina, by his brother Ingild, who died before that prince, had begot Eta, father to Alchmond, from whom sprung Egbert [d], a young man of the most promising hopes, who gave great jealousy to Brithric, the reigning prince, both because he seemed by his birth better entitled to the crown, and because he had acquired, to an eminent degree, the affections of the people. Egbert, sensible of his danger from the suspicions of Brithric, secretly withdrew into France [e]; where he was well received by Charlemagne. By living in the court, and serving in the armies of that prince, the most able and most generous that had appeared in Europe during several ages, he acquired those accomplishments, which afterwards enabled him to make such a shining figure on the throne. And familiarizing himself to the manners of the French, who, as Malmesbury observes [f], were eminent both for valour and civility above all the western nations, he learned to polish the rudeness and barbarity of the Saxon character: His early misfortunes thus proved of singular advantage to him.

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It was not long ere Egbert had opportunities of displaying his natural and acquired talents. Brithric, king of Wessex, had married Eadburga, natural daughter of Offa, king of Mercia, a profligate woman, equally infamous for cruelty and for incontinence. Having great influence over her husband, she often instigated him to destroy such of the nobility as were obnoxious to her; and where this expedient failed, she scrupled not being herself active in traiterous attempts against them. She had mixed a cup of poison for a young nobleman, who had acquired her husband's friendship, and had on that account become the object of her jealousy: But, unfortunately, the king drank of the fatal cup along

[d] Chron. Sax. p. 16. [e] H. Hunting. lib. 4. [f] Lib. 2. cap. 11.

with

CHAP. I. with his favourite, and soon after expired [g]. This tragical incident, joined to her other crimes, rendered Eadburga so odious, that she was obliged to fly into France; whence Egbert was at the same time recalled by the nobility, in order to ascend the throne of his ancestors [h]. He attained that dignity in the last year of the eighth century.

In the kingdoms of the Heptarchy, an exact rule of succession was either unknown or not strictly observed; and thence the reigning prince was continually agitated with jealousy against all the princes of the blood, whom he still considered as rivals, and whose death alone could give him entire security in his possession of the throne. From this fatal cause, together with the admiration of the monastic life, and the opinion of merit attending the preservation of chastity even in a married state, the royal families had been entirely extinguished in all the kingdoms except that of Wessex; and the emulations, suspicions, and conspiracies, which had formerly been confined to the princes of the blood alone, were now diffused among all the nobility in the several Saxon states. Egbert was the sole descendant of those first conquerors who subdued Britain, and who enhanced their authority by claiming a pedigree from Woden, the supreme divinity of their ancestors. But that prince, though invited by this favourable circumstance to make attempts on the neighbouring Saxons, gave them for some time no disturbance, and rather chose to turn his arms against the Britons in Cornwal, whom he defeated in several battles [i]. He was recalled from the conquest of that country by an invasion made upon his dominions by Bernulf, king of Mercia.

[g] Higden, lib. 5. M. West. p. 152. Asser. in vita Alfredi, p. 3. ex edit. Camdeni. [h] Chron. Sax. A. D. 800. Brompton, p. 801. [i] Chron. Sax. p. 69.

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The Mercians, before the acceſſion of Egbert, had very nearly attained the abſolute ſovereignty in the Heptarchy: They had reduced the Eaſt-Angles under ſubjection, and eſtabliſhed tributary princes in the kingdoms of Kent and Eſſex. Northumberland was involved in anarchy; and no ſtate of any conſequence remained but that of Weſſex, which, much inferior in extent to Mercia, was ſupported ſolely by the great qualities of its ſovereign. Egbert led his army againſt the invaders; and encountering them at Ellandum in Wiltſhire, obtained a complete victory, and by the great ſlaughter which he made of them in their flight, gave a mortal blow to the power of the Mercians. Whilſt he himſelf, in proſecution of his victory, entered their country on the ſide of Oxfordſhire, and threatened the heart of their dominions; he ſent an army into Kent, commanded by Ethelwolph, his eldeſt ſon[k]; and expelling Baldred, the tributary king, ſoon made himſelf maſter of that country. The kingdom of Eſſex was conquered with equal facility; and the Eaſt-Angles, from their hatred to the Mercian government, which had been eſtabliſhed over them by treachery and violence, and probably exerciſed with tyranny, immediately roſe in arms, and craved the protection of Egbert[l]. Bernulf, the Mercian king, who marched againſt them, was defeated and ſlain; and two years after, Ludican, his ſucceſſor, met with the ſame fate. Theſe inſurrections and calamities facilitated the enterpriſes of Egbert, who advanced into the centre of the Mercian territories, and made eaſy conqueſts over a diſpirited and divided people. In order to engage them more eaſily to ſubmiſſion, he allowed Wiglef, their countryman, to retain the title of king, while he himſelf exerciſed the real powers of ſovereignty[m]. The anarchy which prevailed in Northumberland, tempted him to carry

[k] Ethelwerd, lib. 3. cap. 2. [l] Ibid. lib. 3. cap. 3.
[m] Ingulph. p. 7, 8. 10.

ſtill

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ſtill farther his victorious arms; and the inhabitants, unable to reſiſt his power, and deſirous of poſſeſſing ſome eſtabliſhed form of government, were forward, on his firſt appearance, to ſend deputies, who ſubmitted to his authority, and ſwore allegiance to him as their ſovereign. Egbert, however, ſtill allowed to Northumberland, as he had done to Mercia and Eaſt-Anglia, the power of electing a king, who paid him tribute, and was dependent on him.

THUS were united all the kingdoms of the Heptarchy in one great ſtate, near four hundred years after the firſt arrival of the Saxons in Britain; and the fortunate arms and prudent policy of Egbert at laſt effected, what had been ſo often attempted in vain by ſo many princes[n]. Kent, Northumberland, and Mercia, which had ſucceſſively aſpired to general dominion, were now incorporated in his empire; and the other ſubordinate kingdoms ſeemed willingly to ſhare the ſame fate. His territories were nearly of the ſame extent with what is now properly called England; and a favourable proſpect was afforded to the Anglo-Saxons, of eſtabliſhing a civilized monarchy, poſſeſſed of tranquillity within itſelf, and ſecure againſt foreign invaſion. This great event happened in the year 827°.

THE Saxons, though they had been ſo long ſettled in the iſland, ſeem not as yet to have been much improved beyond their German anceſtors, either in arts, civility, knowledge, humanity, juſtice, or obedience to the laws. Even Chriſtianity, though it opened the way to connexions between them and the more poliſhed ſtates of Europe, had not hitherto been very effectual in baniſhing their ignorance, or ſoftening their barbarous manners. As they received that doctrine through the corrupted channels of Rome, it carried along with it a great mixture of credulity and ſuperſtition, equally de-

[n] Chron. Sax. p. 71. [o] Ibid.

ſtructive

ſtructive to the underſtanding and to morals. The reverence towards ſaints and reliques ſeems to have almoſt ſupplanted the adoration of the Supreme Being. Monaſtic obſervances were eſteemed more meritorious than the active virtues: The knowledge of natural cauſes was neglected from the univerſal belief of miraculous interpoſitions and judgments: Bounty to the church atoned for every violence againſt ſociety: And the remorſes for cruelty, murder, treachery, aſſaſſination, and the more robuſt vices, were appeaſed, not by amendment of life, but by penances, ſervility to the monks, and an abject and illiberal devotion [p]. The reverence for the clergy had been carried to ſuch a height, that, wherever a perſon appeared in a ſacerdotal habit, though on the highway, the people flocked around him; and ſhowing him all marks of profound reſpect, received every word he utterred as the moſt ſacred oracle [q]. Even the military virtues, ſo inherent in all the Saxon tribes, began to be neglected; and the nobility, preferring the ſecurity and ſloth of the cloiſter to the tumults and glory of war, valued themſelves chiefly on endowing monaſteries, of which they aſſumed the government [r]. The ſeveral kings too, being extremely impoveriſhed by continual benefactions to the church, to which the ſtates of their kingdoms had weakly aſſented, could beſtow no rewards on valour or military ſervices, and retained not even ſufficient influence to ſupport their government [s].

[p] Theſe abuſes were common to all the European churches; but the prieſts in Italy, Spain, and Gaul, made ſome atonement for them by other advantages which they rendered ſociety. For ſeveral ages they were almoſt all Romans, or, in other words, the ancient natives; and they preſerved the Roman language and laws, with ſome remains of the former civility. But the prieſts in the Heptarchy, after the firſt miſſionaries, were wholly Saxons, and almoſt as ignorant and barbarous as the laity. They contributed, therefore, little to the improvement of the ſociety in knowledge or the arts.

[q] Bede, lib. 3. cap. 26. [r] Ibid. lib. 5. cap. 23. Epiſtola Bedæ ad Egbert. [s] Bedæ Epiſt. ad Egbert.

ANOTHER

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ANOTHER inconvenience which attended this corrupt species of Christianity, was the superstitious attachment to Rome, and the gradual subjection of the kingdom to a foreign jurisdiction. The Britons, having never acknowledged any subordination to the Roman pontiff, had conducted all ecclesiastical government by their domestic synods and councils[t]: But the Saxons, receiving their religion from Roman monks, were taught at the same time a profound reverence for that see, and were naturally led to regard it as the capital of their religion. Pilgrimages to Rome were represented as the most meritorious acts of devotion. Not only noblemen and ladies of rank undertook this tedious journey[u]; but kings themselves, abdicating their crowns, sought for a secure passport to heaven at the feet of the Roman pontiff. New reliques, perpetually sent from that endless mint of superstition, and magnified by lying miracles invented in convents, operated on the astonished minds of the multitude. And every prince has attained the eulogies of the monks, the only historians of those ages, not in proportion to his civil and military virtues, but to his devoted attachment towards their order, and his superstitious reverence for Rome.

THE sovereign pontiff, encouraged by this blindness and submissive disposition of the people, advanced every day in his encroachments on the independence of the English churches. Wilfrid, bishop of Lindisferne, the sole prelate of the Northumbrian kingdom, increased this subjection in the eighth century, by his making an appeal to Rome against the decisions of an English synod, which had abridged his diocese by the erection of some new bishoprics[w]. Agatho, the pope, readily embraced this precedent of an appeal to his court; and Wil-

[t] Append. to Bede, numb. 10. ex edit. 1722. Spelm. Conc. p. 108, 109. [u] Bede, lib. 5. c. 7. [w] See Appendix to Bede, numb. 19. Higden, lib. 5.

frid,

frid, though the haughtieſt and moſt luxurious prelate of his age [x], having obtained with the people the character of ſanctity, was thus able to lay the foundation of this papal pretenſion.

THE great topic by which Wilfrid confounded the imaginations of men was, that St. Peter, to whoſe cuſtody the keys of heaven were entruſted, would certainly refuſe admittance to every one who ſhould be wanting in reſpect to his ſucceſſor. This conceit, well ſuited to vulgar conceptions, made great impreſſion on the people during ſeveral ages; and has not even at preſent loſt all influence in the catholic countries.

HAD this abject ſuperſtition produced general peace and tranquillity, it had made ſome atonement for the ills attending it; but beſides the uſual avidity of men for power and riches, frivolous controverſies in theology were engendered by it, which were ſo much the more fatal, as they admitted not like the others, of any final determination from eſtabliſhed poſſeſſion. The diſputes excited in Britain were of the moſt ridiculous kind, and entirely worthy of thoſe ignorant and barbarous ages. There were ſome intricacies, obſerved by all the Chriſtian churches, in adjuſting the day of keeping Eaſter; which depended on a complicated conſideration of the courſe of the ſun and moon: And it happened that the miſſionaries, who had converted the Scots and Britons, had followed a different calendar from that which was obſerved at Rome in the age when Auguſtine converted the Saxons. The prieſts alſo of all the Chriſtian churches were accuſtomed to ſhave part of their head; but the form given to this tonſure was different in the former from what was practiſed in the latter. The Scots and Britons pleaded the antiquity of *their* uſages; The Romans, and their diſciples, the Saxons, in-

[x] Eddius vita Vilfr. § 24. 60.

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fifted on the univerfality of *theirs*. That Eafter muft neceffarily be kept by a rule, which comprehended both the day of the year and age of the moon, was agreed by all; that the tonfure of a prieft could not be omitted without the utmoft impiety, was a point undifputed: But the Romans and Saxons called their antagonifts fchifmatics; becaufe they celebrated Eafter on the very day of the full moon in March, if that day fell on a Sunday, inftead of waiting till the Sunday following; and becaufe they fhaved the fore-part of their head from ear to ear, inftead of making that tonfure on the crown of the head, and in a circular form. In order to render their antagonifts odious, they affirmed that once in feven years they concurred with the Jews in the time of celebrating that feftival[y]: And that they might recommend their own form of tonfure, they maintained, that it imitated fymbolically the crown of thorns worn by Chrift in his paffion; whereas the other form was invented by Simon Magus, without any regard to that reprefentation[z]. Thefe controverfies had, from the beginning, excited fuch animofity between the Britifh and Romifh priefts, that, inftead of concurring in their endeavours to convert the idolatrous Saxons, they refufed all communion together, and each regarded his opponent as no better than a Pagan[a]. The difpute lafted more than a century; and was at laft finifhed, not by men's difcovering the folly of it, which would have been too great an effort for human reafon to accomplifh, but by the entire prevalence of the Romifh ritual over the Scotch and Britifh[b]. Wilfrid, bifhop of Landisferne, acquired great merit, both with the court of Rome and with all the fouthern Saxons, by expelling the quartodeciman fchifm, as it was called, from the Northumbrian

[y] Bede, lib 2. cap. 19. [z] Bede, lib. 5. cap. 21. Eddius, § 24. [a] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 2. 4. 20. Eddius, § 12. [b] Bede, lib. 5. cap. 16. 22.

kingdom

kingdom, into which the neighbourhood of the Scots had formerly introduced it[c].

THEODORE, archbishop of Canterbury, called, in the year 680, a synod at Hatfield, consisting of all the bishops in Britain[d]; where was accepted and ratified the decree of the Lateran council, summoned by Martin against the heresy of the Monothelites. The council and synod maintained, in opposition to these heretics, that, though the divine and human nature in Christ made but one person, yet had they different inclinations, wills, acts, and sentiments, and that the unity of the person implied not any unity in the consciousness[e]. This opinion it seems somewhat difficult to comprehend; and no one, unacquainted with the ecclesiastical history of those ages, could imagine the height of zeal and violence with which it was then inculcated. The decree of the Lateran council calls the Monothelites impious, execrable, wicked, abominable, and even diabolical; and curses and anathematizes them to all eternity[f].

THE Saxons, from the first introduction of Christianity among them, had admitted the use of images; and perhaps that religion, without some of those exterior ornaments, had not made so quick a progress with these idolaters: But they had not paid any species of worship or address to images; and this abuse never prevailed among Christians, till it received the sanction of the second council of Nice.

[c] Bede, lib. 3. cap. 25. Eddius, § 12. [d] Spell. Conc. vol. i. p. 168. [e] Ibid. p. 171. [f] Ibid. p. 172, 173, 174.

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Egbert——Ethelwolf——Ethelbald and Ethelbert ——Ethered——Alfred the Great——Edward the Elder——Athelſtan——Edmund——Edred—Edwy——Edgar——Edward the Martyr.

EGBERT.

CHAP. II. 827.

THE Kingdoms of the Heptarchy, though united by ſo recent a conqueſt, ſeemed to be firmly cemented into one ſtate under Egbert; and the inhabitants of the ſeveral provinces had loſt all deſire of revolting from that monarch, or of reſtoring their former independent governments. Their language was every where nearly the ſame, their cuſtoms, laws, inſtitutions civil and religious; and as the race of the ancient kings was totally extinct in all the ſubjected ſtates, the people readily transferred their allegiance to a prince, who ſeemed to merit it, by the ſplendour of his victories, the vigour of his adminiſtration, and the ſuperior nobility of his birth. A union alſo in government opened to them the agreeable proſpect of future tranquillity; and it appeared more probable, that they would henceforth become formidable to their neighbours, than be expoſed to their inroads and devaſtations. But theſe flattering views were ſoon overcaſt by the appearance of the Danes, who, during ſome centuries, kept the Anglo-Saxons in perpetual inquietude, committed the moſt barbarous ravages upon them, and at laſt reduced them to grievous ſervitude.

THE emperor Charlemagne, though naturally generous and humane, had been induced by bigotry to exerciſe great ſeverities upon the Pagan Saxons in Germany, whom he ſubdued; and beſides often ravaging

vaging their country with fire and ſword, he had in cool blood decimated all the inhabitants for their revolts, and had obliged them, by the moſt rigorous edicts, to make a ſeeming compliance with the Chriſtian doctrine. That religion, which had eaſily made its way among the Britiſh Saxons by inſinuation and addreſs, appeared ſhocking to their German brethren, when impoſed on them by the violence of Charlemagne; and the more generous and warlike of theſe Pagans had fled northward into Jutland, in order to eſcape the fury of his perſecutions. Meeting there with a people of ſimilar manners, they were readily received among them; and they ſoon ſtimulated the natives to concur in enterpriſes, which both promiſed revenge on the haughty conqueror, and afforded ſubſiſtence to thoſe numerous inhabitants with which the northern countries were now overburdened[g]. They invaded the provinces of France, which were expoſed by the degeneracy and diſſenſions of Charlemagne's poſterity; and being there known under the general name of Normans, which they received from their northern ſituation, they became the terror of all the maritime and even of the inland countries. They were alſo tempted to viſit England in their frequent excurſions; and being able, by ſudden inroads, to make great progreſs over a people who were not defended by any naval force, who had relaxed their military inſtitutions, and who were ſunk into a ſuperſtition which had become odious to the Danes and ancient Saxons, they made no diſtinction in their hoſtilities between the French and Engliſh kingdoms. Their firſt appearance in this iſland was in the year 787[h], when Brithric reigned in Weſſex. A ſmall body of them landed in that kingdom, with a view of learning the ſtate of the country; and when the magiſtrate of the place queſtioned them concerning their enter-

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g Ypod. Neuſtria, p. 414. h Chron. Sax. p. 64.

 priſe,

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prise, and summoned them to appear before the king, and account for their intentions, they killed him, and flying to their ships, escaped into their own country. The next alarm was given to Northumberland in the year 794[i]; when a body of these pirates pillaged a monastery; but their ships being much damaged by a storm, and their leader slain in a skirmish, they were at last defeated by the inhabitants, and the remainder of them put to the
832. sword. Five years after Egbert had established his monarchy over England, the Danes landed in the Isle of Shepey, and having pillaged it, escaped with impunity[k]. They were not so fortunate in their next year's enterprise, when they disembarked from thirty-five ships, and were encountered by Egbert, at Charmouth in Dorsetshire. The battle was bloody; but though the Danes lost great numbers, they maintained the post which they had taken, and thence made good their retreat to their ships[l]. Having learned by experience, that they must expect a vigorous resistance from this warlike prince, they entered into an alliance with the Britons of Cornwal; and landing two years after in that country, made an inroad with their confederates into the county of Devon; but were met at Hengesdown by Egbert, and totally defeated[m]. While England remained in this state of anxiety, and defended itself more by temporary expedients than by any regular plan of administration, Egbert, who alone was able to provide effectually against this new evil, unfor-
838. tunately died; and left the government to his son Ethelwolf.

i Chron. Sax. p. 66. Alur. Beverl. p. 108. k Chron. Sax. p. 72. l Ibid. Ethelward, lib. 3. cap. 2. m Chron. Sax. p. 72.

CHAP. II.

ETHELWOLF.

THIS prince had neither the abilities nor the vigour of his father; and was better qualified for governing a convent than a kingdom[n]. He began his reign with making a partition of his dominions, and delivering over to his eldest son, Athelstan, the new conquered provinces of Essex, Kent, and Sussex. But no inconveniencies seem to have arisen from this partition; as the continual terror of the Danish invasions prevented all domestic dissension. A fleet of these ravagers, consisting of thirty-three sail, appeared at Southampton; but were repulsed with loss by Wolfhere, governor of the neighbouring country[o]. The same year, Æthelhelm, governor of Dorsetshire, routed another band which had disembarked at Portsmouth; but he obtained the victory after a furious engagement, and he bought it with the loss of his life[p]. Next year the Danes made several inroads into England; and fought battles, or rather skirmishes, in East-Anglia and Lindesey and Kent; where, though they were sometimes repulsed and defeated, they always obtained their end, of committing spoil upon the country, and carrying off their booty. They avoided coming to a general engagement, which was not suited to their plan of operations. Their vessels were small, and ran easily up the creeks and rivers; where they drew them ashore, and having formed an entrenchment round them, which they guarded with part of their number, the remainder scattered themselves every where, and carrying off the inhabitants and cattle and goods, they hastened to their ships, and quickly disappeared. If the military force of the county were assembled (for there was no time for troops to march

[n] Wm. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 2. Ethelward, lib. 3. cap. 3. H. Hunting. lib. 5.

[o] Chron. Sax. p. 73.

[p] Chron. Sax. p. 73.

from

CHAP. II. from a diſtance), the Danes either were able to repulſe them, and to continue their ravages with impunity, or they betook themſelves to their veſſels; and ſetting ſail, ſuddenly invaded ſome diſtant quarter, which was not prepared for their reception. Every part of England was held in continual alarm; and the inhabitants of one county durſt not give aſſiſtance to thoſe of another, leſt their own families and property ſhould in the mean time be expoſed by their abſence to the fury of theſe barbarous ravagers[q]. All orders of men were involved in this calamity; and the prieſts and monks, who had been commonly ſpared in the domeſtic quarrels of the Heptarchy, were the chief objects on which the Daniſh idolaters exerciſed their rage and animoſity. Every ſeaſon of the year was dangerous; and the abſence of the enemy was no reaſon why any man could eſteem himſelf a moment in ſafety.

THESE incurſions had now become almoſt annual; when the Danes, encouraged by their ſucceſſes againſt France as well as England (for both kingdoms were alike expoſed to this dreadful calamity),
851. invaded the laſt in ſo numerous a body, as ſeemed to threaten it with univerſal ſubjection. But the Engliſh, more military than the Britons, whom, a few centuries before, they had treated with like violence, rouſed themſelves with a vigour proportioned to the exigency. Ceorle, governor of Devonſhire, fought a battle with one body of the Danes at Wiganburgh[r], and put them to route with great ſlaughter. King Athelſtan attacked another at ſea near Sandwich, ſunk nine of their ſhips, and put the reſt to flight[s]. A body of them, however, ventured, for the firſt time, to take up winter-quarters in England; and receiving in the ſpring a ſtrong reinforcement of their countrymen in 350

[q] Alured Beverl. p. 108. [r] H. Hunt. lib. 5. Ethelward, lib. 3. cap. 3. Simeon Dunelm. p. 120. [s] Chron. Sax. p. 74. Aſſerius, p. 2.

vessels, they advanced from the Isle of Thanet, where they had stationed themselves; burnt the cities of London and Canterbury; and having put to flight Brichtric, who now governed Mercia under the title of King, they marched into the heart of Surrey, and laid every place waste around them. Ethelwolf, impelled by the urgency of the danger, marched against them at the head of the West-Saxons; and carrying with him his second son, Ethelbald, gave them battle at Okely, and gained a bloody victory over them. This advantage procured but a short respite to the English. The Danes still maintained their settlement in the Isle of Thanet; and being attacked by Ealher and Huda, governors of Kent and Surrey, though defeated in the beginning of the action, they finally repulsed the assailants, and killed both the governors. They removed thence to the Isle of Shepey; where they took up their winter-quarters, that they might farther extend their devastation and ravages.

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853.

THIS unsettled state of England hindered not Ethelwolf from making a pilgrimage to Rome; whither he carried his fourth, and favourite son, Alfred, then only six years of age[t]. He passed there a twelvemonth in exercises of devotion; and failed not in that most essential part of devotion, liberality to the church of Rome. Besides giving presents to the more distinguished ecclesiastics, he made a perpetual grant of three hundred mancuses[u] a year to that see; one third to support the lamps of St. Peter's, another those of St. Paul's, a third to the pope himself[w]. In his return home, he married Judith, daughter of the emperor Charles the Bald; but on his landing in England, he met with an opposition which he little looked for.

[t] Asserius, p. 2. Chron Sax. 76. Hunt. lib. 5. [u] A mancus was about the weight of our present half crown: See Spelman's Glossary, in verbo Mancus. [w] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 2.

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His eldeſt ſon, Athelſtan, being dead; Ethelbald, his ſecond, who had aſſumed the government, formed, in concert with many of the nobles, the project of excluding his father from a throne, which his weakneſs and ſuperſtition ſeem to have rendered him ſo ill-qualified to fill. The people were divided between the two princes; and a bloody civil war, joined to all the other calamities under which the Engliſh laboured, appeared inevitable; when Ethelwolf had the facility to yield to the greater part of his ſon's pretenſions. He made with him a partition of the kingdom; and taking to himſelf the eaſtern part, which was always at that time eſteemed the leaſt conſiderable, as well as the moſt expoſed[x], he delivered over to Ethelbald the ſovereignty of the weſtern. Immediately after, he ſummoned the ſtates of the whole kingdom, and with the ſame facility conferred a perpetual and important donation on the church.

The eccleſiaſtics, in thoſe days of ignorance, made rapid advances in the acquiſition of power and grandeur; and inculcating the moſt abſurd and moſt intereſted doctrines, though they ſometimes met, from the contrary intereſts of the laity, with an oppoſition, which it required time and addreſs to overcome, they found no obſtacle in their reaſon or underſtanding. Not content with the donations of land made them by the Saxon princes and nobles, and with temporary oblations from the devotion of the people, they had caſt a wiſhful eye on a vaſt revenue, which they claimed as belonging to them, by a ſacred and indefeaſible title. However little verſed in the ſcriptures, they had been able to diſcover, that, under the Jewiſh law, a tenth of all the produce of land was conferred on the prieſthood; and forgetting what they themſelves taught, that the moral part only of that law was obligatory on Chriſtians, they inſiſted,

[x] Aſſerius, p. 3. W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 2. Matth. Weſt. p. 158.

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that this donation conveyed a perpetual property, inherent by divine right in thofe who officiated at the altar. During fome centuries, the whole fcope of fermons and homilies was directed to this purpofe; and one would have imagined, from the general tenor of thefe difcourfes, that all the practical parts of Chriftianity were comprifed in the exact and faithful payment of tithes to the clergy [y]. Encouraged by their fuccefs in inculcating thefe doctrines, they ventured farther than they were warranted even by the Levitical law, and pretended to draw the tenth of all induftry, merchandize, wages of labourers, and pay of foldiers [z]; nay, fome canonifts went fo far as to affirm, that the clergy were entitled to the tithe of the profits made by courtezans in the exercife of their profeffion [a]. Though parifhes had been inftituted in England by Honorius, archbifhop of Canterbury, near two centuries before [b], the ecclefiaftics had never yet been able to get poffeffion of the tithes: They therefore feized the prefent favourable opportunity of making that acquifition; when a weak, fuperftitious prince filled the throne, and when the people, difcouraged by their loffes from the Danes, and terrified with the fear of future invafions, were fufceptible of any impreffion which bore the appearance of religion [c]. So meritorious was this conceffion deemed by the Englifh, that, trufting entirely to fupernatural affiftance, they neglected the ordinary means of fafety; and agreed, even in the prefent defperate extremity, that the revenues of the church fhould be exempted from all burthens, though impofed for national defence and fecurity [d].

[y] Padre Paolo, fopra beneficii ecclefiaftici, p. 51, 52. edit. Colon. 1675. [z] Spell. Conc. vol. i. p. 268. [a] Padre Paolo, p. 132. [b] Parker, p. 77. [c] Ingulf. p. 862. Selden's Hift. of Tithes, c. 8. [d] Afferius, p. 2. Chron. Sax. p. 76. W. Malmef. lib. 2. cap. 2. Ethelward, lib. 3. cap. 3. M. Weft. p. 158. Ingulf. p. 17. Alur. Beverl. p. 95.

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ETHELBALD and ETHELBERT.

857. ETHELWOLF lived only two years after making this grant; and by his will he ſhared England between his two eldeſt ſons, Ethelbald and Ethelbert; the weſt being aſſigned to the former; the eaſt to the latter. Ethelbald was a profligate prince; and marrying Judith, his mother-in-law, gave great offence to the people; but moved by the remonſtrances of Swithun, biſhop of Wincheſter, he was at laſt prevailed on to divorce her. His reign was ſhort; and Ethelbert, his brother, ſucceeding to the government, behaved himſelf, during a reign of five years, in a manner more worthy of his birth and ſtation. The kingdom, however, was ſtill infeſted by the Danes, who made an inroad and ſacked Wincheſter, but were there defeated. A body alſo of theſe pirates, who were quartered in the Iſle of Thanet, having deceived the Engliſh by a treaty, unexpectedly broke into Kent, and committed great outrages.

ETHERED.

ETHELBERT was ſucceeded by his brother Ethered, who, though he defended himſelf with bravery, enjoyed, during his whole reign, no tranquillity from thoſe Daniſh irruptions. His younger brother, Alfred, ſeconded him in all his enterpriſes; and generouſly ſacrificed to the public good all reſentment which he might entertain on account of his being excluded by Ethered from a large patrimony which had been left him by his father.

THE firſt landing of the Danes in the reign of Ethered was among the Eaſt-Angles, who, more anxious for their preſent ſafety than for the common intereſt, entered into a ſeparate treaty with the enemy;

enemy; and furnished them with horses, which enabled them to make an irruption by land into the kingdom of Northumberland. They there seized the city of York; and defended it against Osbricht and Ælla, two Northumbrian princes, who perished in the assault[f]. Encouraged by these successes, and by the superiority which they had acquired in arms, they now ventured, under the command of Hinguar and Hubba, to leave the sea-coast, and penetrating into Mercia, they took up their winter-quarters at Nottingham, where they threatened the kingdom with a final subjection. The Mercians, in this extremity, applied to Ethered for succour; and that prince, with his brother Alfred, conducting a great army to Nottingham, obliged the enemy to dislodge, and to retreat into Northumberland. Their restless disposition, and their avidity for plunder, allowed them not to remain long in those quarters: They broke into East-Anglia, defeated and took prisoner Edmund, the king of that country, whom they afterwards murdered in cool blood; and committing the most barbarous ravages on the people, particularly on the monasteries, they gave the East-Angles cause to regret the temporary relief which they had obtained, by assisting the common enemy.

870.

THE next station of the Danes was at Reading; whence they infested the neighbouring country by their incursions. The Mercians, desirous of shaking off their dependence on Ethered, refused to join him with their forces; and that prince, attended by Alfred, was obliged to march against the enemy, with the West-Saxons alone, his hereditary subjects. The Danes, being defeated in an action, shut themselves up in their garrison; but quickly making thence an irruption, they routed the West-Saxons, and obliged them to raise the siege. An 871.

f Asser. p. 6. Chron. Sax. p. 79.

action

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action soon after ensued at Aston in Berkshire, where the English, in the beginning of the day, were in danger of a total defeat. Alfred advancing with one division of the army, was surrounded by the enemy in disadvantageous ground; and Ethered, who was at that time hearing mass, refused to march to his assistance, till prayers should be finished[g]: But as he afterwards obtained the victory, this success, not the danger of Alfred, was ascribed by the monks to the piety of that monarch. This battle of Aston did not terminate the war: Another battle was a little after fought at Basing; where the Danes were more successful; and being reinforced by a new army from their own country, they became every day more terrible to the English. Amidst these confusions, Ethered died of a wound which he had received in an action with the Danes; and left the inheritance of his cares and misfortunes, rather than of his grandeur, to his brother, Alfred, who was now twenty-two years of age.

ALFRED.

871. THIS prince gave very early marks of those great virtues and shining talents, by which, during the most difficult times, he saved his country from utter ruin and subversion. Ethelwolf, his father, the year after his return with Alfred from Rome, had again sent the young prince thither with a numerous retinue; and a report being spread of the king's death, the pope, Leo III. gave Alfred the royal unction[h]; whether prognosticating his future greatness from the appearances of his pregnant genius, or willing to pretend, even in that age, to the right of conferring kingdoms. Alfred, on his return home, became every day more

[g] Asser. p. 7. W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 3. Simeon Dunelm. p. 125. Anglia Sacra, vol. 1. p. 205. [h] Asser. p. 2. W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 2. Ingulf. p. 869. Simeon Dunelm. p. 120. 139.

the

the object of his father's affections; but being indulged in all youthful pleasures, he was much neglected in his education; and he had already reached his twelfth year, when he was yet totally ignorant of the lowest elements of literature. His genius was first roused by the recital of Saxon poems, in which the queen took delight; and this species of erudition, which is sometimes able to make a considerable progress even among barbarians, expanded those noble and elevated sentiments which he had received from nature [i]. Encouraged by the queen, and stimulated by his own ardent inclination, he soon learned to read those compositions; and proceeded thence to acquire the knowledge of the Latin tongue, in which he met with authors that better prompted his heroic spirit, and directed his generous views. Absorbed in these elegant pursuits, he regarded his accession to royalty rather as an object of regret than of triumph [k]; but being called to the throne, in preference to his brother's children, as well by the will of his father, a circumstance which had great authority with the Anglo-Saxons [l], as by the vows of the whole nation, and the urgency of public affairs, he shook off his literary indolence, and exerted himself in the defence of his people. He had scarcely buried his brother, when he was obliged to take the field, in order to oppose the Danes, who had seized Wilton, and were exercising their usual ravages on the countries around. He marched against them with the few troops which he could assemble on a sudden; and giving them battle, gained at first an advantage, but by his pursuing the victory too far, the superiority of the enemy's numbers prevailed, and recovered them the day. Their loss, however, in the action was so considerable, that, fearing Alfred would receive daily reinforcement from his sub-

[i] Asser. p. 5. M. West. p. 167. [k] Asser. p. 7. [l] Ibid. p. 22. Simeon Dunelm. p. 121.

jects,

CHAP. II. jects, they were content to stipulate for a safe retreat, and promised to depart the kingdom. For that purpose they were conducted to London, and allowed to take up winter quarters there; but, careless of their engagements, they immediately set themselves to the committing of spoil on the neighbouring country. Burrhed, king of Mercia, in whose territories London was situated, made a new stipulation with them, and engaged them, by presents of money, to remove to Lindesey in Lincolnshire; a country which they had already reduced to ruin and desolation. Finding therefore no object in that place, either for their rapine or violence, they suddenly turned back upon Mercia, in a quarter where they expected to find it without defence; and fixing their station at Repton in Derbyshire, they laid the whole country desolate with fire and sword. Burrhed, despairing of success against an enemy, whom no force could resist, and no treaties bind, abandoned his kingdom, and flying to Rome, took shelter in a cloister[m]. He was brother-in-law to Alfred, and the last who bore the title of King in Mercia.

The West-Saxons were now the only remaining power in England; and though supported by the vigour and abilities of Alfred, they were unable to sustain the efforts of those ravagers, who from all
875. quarters invaded them. A new swarm of Danes came over this year under three princes, Guthrum, Oscital, and Amund; and having first joined their countrymen at Repton, they soon found the necessity of separating, in order to provide for their subsistence. Part of them, under the command of Haldene, their chieftain[n], marched into Northumberland, where they fixed their quarters; part of them took quarters at Cambridge, whence they dislodged in the ensuing summer, and seized Were-

[m] Asser. p. 8. Chron. Sax. p. 82. Ethelward, lib. 4. cap. 4.
[n] Chron. Sax. p. 83.

ham,

ham, in the county of Dorſet, the very centre of Alfred's dominions. That prince ſo ſtraightened them in theſe quarters, that they were content to come to a treaty with him, and ſtipulated to depart his country. Alfred, well acquainted with their uſual perfidy, obliged them to ſwear upon the holy reliques to the obſervance of the treaty [o]; not that he expected they would pay any veneration to the reliques; but he hoped, that, if they now violated this oath, their impiety would infallibly draw down upon them the vengeance of Heaven. But the Danes, little apprehenſive of the danger, ſuddenly, without ſeeking any pretence, fell upon Alfred's army; and having put it to route, marched weſtward and took poſſeſſion of Exeter. The prince collected new forces, and exerted ſuch vigour, that he fought in one year eight battles with the enemy [p], and reduced them to the utmoſt extremity. He hearkened however to new propoſals of peace; and was ſatisfied to ſtipulate with them, that they would ſettle ſomewhere in England [q], and would not permit the entrance of more ravagers into the kingdom. But while he was expecting the execution of this treaty, which it ſeemed the intereſt of the Danes themſelves to fulfil, he heard that another body had landed, and having collected all the ſcattered troops of their conntrymen, had ſurpriſed Chippenham, then a conſiderable town, and were exerciſing their uſual ravages all around them.

This laſt incident quite broke the ſpirit of the Saxons, and reduced them to deſpair. Finding that, after all the miſerable havoc which they had undergone in their perſons and in their property; after all the vigorous actions which they had exerted in their own defence; a new band, equally greedy of ſpoil and ſlaughter, had diſembarked among them; they believed themſelves abandoned

[o] Aſſer. p. 8. [p] Ibid. The Saxon Chron. p. 82. ſays nine battles. [q] Aſſer. p. 9. Alur. Beverl. p. 104.

by

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by Heaven to destruction, and delivered over to those swarms of robbers, which the fertile north thus incessantly poured forth against them. Some left their country, and retired into Wales, or fled beyond sea: Others submitted to the conquerors, in hopes of appeasing their fury by a servile obedience[r]. And every man's attention being now engrossed in concern for his own preservation, no one would hearken to the exhortations of the king, who summoned them to make under his conduct one effort more in defence of their prince, their country, and their liberties. Alfred himself was obliged to relinquish the ensigns of his dignity, to dismiss his servants, and to seek shelter, in the meanest disguises, from the pursuit and fury of his enemies. He concealed himself under a peasant's habit, and lived some time in the house of a neat-herd, who had been entrusted with the care of some of his cows[s]. There passed here an incident, which has been recorded by all the historians, and was long preserved by popular tradition; though it contains nothing memorable in itself, except so far as every circumstance is interesting, which attends so much virtue and dignity reduced to such distress. The wife of the neat-herd was ignorant of the condition of her royal guest; and observing him one day busy by the fire-side, in trimming his bow and arrows, she desired him to take care of some cakes which were toasting, while she was employed elsewhere in other domestic affairs. But Alfred, whose thoughts were otherwise engaged, neglected this injunction; and the good woman, on her return, finding her cakes all burnt, rated the king very severely, and upbraided him, that he always seemed very well pleased to eat her warm cakes, though he was thus negligent in toasting them[t].

[r] Chron. Sax. p. 84. Alured Beverl. p. 105. [s] Asser. p. 9.
[t] Asser. p. 9. M. West. p. 170.

By degrees, Alfred, as he found the ſearch of the enemy become more remiſs, collected ſome of his retainers, and retired into the centre of a bog, formed by the ſtagnating waters of the Thone and Parret, in Somerſetſhire. He here found two acres of firm ground; and building a habitation on them, rendered himſelf ſecure by its fortifications, and ſtill more by the unknown and inacceſſible roads which led to it, and by the foreſts and moraſſes with which it was every way environed. This place he called Æthelingay, or the Iſle of Nobles [u]; and it now bears the name of Athelney. He thence made frequent and unexpected ſallies upon the Danes, who often felt the vigour of his arm, but knew not from what quarter the blow came. He ſubſiſted himſelf and his followers by the plunder which he acquired; he procured them conſolation by revenge; and from ſmall ſucceſſes, he opened their minds to hope, that, notwithſtanding his preſent low condition, more important victories might at length attend his valour.

Alfred lay here concealed, but not unactive, during a twelvemonth; when the news of a proſperous event reached his ears, and called him to the field. Hubba, the Dane, having ſpread devaſtation, fire, and ſlaughter, over Wales, had landed in Devonſhire from twenty-three veſſels, and laid ſiege to the caſtle of Kinwith, a place ſituated near the mouth of the ſmall river Tau. Oddune, earl of Devonſhire, with his followers, had taken ſhelter there; and being ill ſupplied with proviſions, and even with water, he determined, by ſome vigorous blow, to prevent the neceſſity of ſubmitting to the barbarous enemy. He made a ſudden ſally on the Danes before ſun-riſing; and taking them unprepared, he put them to rout, purſued them with great ſlaughter, killed Hubba himſelf, and

[u] Chron. Sax. p. 85. W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4. Ethelward, lib. 4. cap. 4. Ingulf. p. 26.

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got possession of the famous *Reafen*, or enchanted standard, in which the Danes put great confidence [w]. It contained the figure of a raven, which had been inwoven by the three sisters of Hinguar and Hubba with many magical incantations, and which, by its different movements, prognosticated, as the Danes believed, the good or bad success of any enterprise [x].

WHEN Alfred observed this symptom of successful resistance in his subjects, he left his retreat; but before he would assemble them in arms, or urge them to any attempt, which, if unfortunate, might, in their present despondency, prove fatal, he resolved to inspect, himself, the situation of the enemy, and to judge of the probability of success. For this purpose he entered their camp under the disguise of a harper, and passed unsuspected through every quarter. He so entertained them with his music and facetious humours, that he met with a welcome reception; and was even introduced to the tent of Guthrum, their prince, where he remained some days [y]. He remarked the supine security of the Danes, their contempt of the English, their negligence in foraging and plundering, and their dissolute wasting of what they gained by rapine and violence. Encouraged by these favourable appearances, he secretly sent emissaries to the most considerable of his subjects, and summoned them to a rendezvous, attended by their warlike followers, at Brixton, on the borders of Selwood forest [z]. The English, who had hoped to put an end to their calamities by servile submission, now found the insolence and rapine of the conqueror more intolerable than all past fatigues and dangers; and at the appointed day, they joyfully resorted to their prince. On his appearance, they received him with shouts

[w] Asser. p. 10. Chron. Sax. p. 84. Abbas Rieval, p. 395. Alured Beverl. p. 105. [x] Asser. p. 10. [y] W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4. [z] Chron. Sax. p. 85.

of applause[a]; and could not satiate their eyes with the sight of this beloved monarch, whom they had long regarded as dead, and who now, with voice and looks expressing his confidence of success, called them to liberty and to vengeance. He instantly conducted them to Eddington, where the Danes were encamped; and taking advantage of his previous knowledge of the place, he directed his attack against the most unguarded quarter of the enemy. The Danes, surprised to see an army of English, whom they considered as totally subdued, and still more astonished to hear that Alfred was at their head, made but a faint resistance, notwithstanding their superiority of number, and were soon put to flight with great slaughter. The remainder of the routed army, with their prince, was besieged by Alfred in a fortified camp to which they fled; but being reduced to extremity by want and hunger, they had recourse to the clemency of the victor, and offered to submit on any conditions. The king, no less generous than brave, gave them their lives; and even formed a scheme for converting them, from mortal enemies, into faithful subjects and confederates. He knew that the kingdoms of East-Anglia and Northumberland were totally desolated by the frequent inroads of the Danes, and he now proposed to repeople them, by settling there Guthrum and his followers. He hoped that the new planters would at last betake themselves to industry, when, by reason of his resistance, and the exhausted condition of the country, they could no longer subsist by plunder; and that they might serve him as a rampart against any future incursions of their countrymen. But before he ratified these mild conditions with the Danes, he required, that they should give him one pledge of their submission, and of their inclination to incor-

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[a] Asser. p. 10. Chron. Sax. p. 85. Simeon Dunelm. p. 128. Alured Beverl. p. 105. Abbas Rieval, p. 354.

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880. The success of this expedient seemed to correspond to Alfred's hopes: The greater part of the Danes settled peaceably in their new quarters: Some smaller bodies of the same nation, which were dispersed in Mercia, were distributed into the five cities of Derby, Leicester, Stamford, Lincoln, and Nottingham, and were thence called the Fif or Fiveburghers. The more turbulent and unquiet made an expedition into France under the command of Hastings [d]; and, except by a short incursion of Danes, who sailed up the Thames and landed at Fulham, but suddenly retreated to their ships on finding the country in a posture of defence, Alfred was not for some years infested by the inroads of those Barbarians [e].

The king employed this interval of tranquillity in restoring order to the state, which had been shaken by so many violent convulsions; in establishing civil and military institutions; in composing the minds of men to industry and justice; and in providing against the return of like calamities. He was, more properly than his grandfather Egbert, the sole monarch of the English (for so the Saxons were now universally called), because the kingdom of Mercia was at last incorporated in his state, and was governed by Ethelbert his brother-in-law, who bore the title of Earl: And though the Danes, who peopled East-Anglia and Northumberland, were for some time ruled immediately by their own princes, they all acknowledged a subordination to Alfred,

b Chron. Sax. p. 85. c Asser. p. 10. Chron. Sax. p. 90. d W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4. Ingulf, p. 26. e Asser. p. 11.

 and

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and submitted to his superior authority. As equality among subjects is the great source of concord, Alfred gave the same laws to the Danes and English, and put them entirely on a like footing in the administration both of civil and criminal justice. The fine for the murder of a Dane was the same with that for the murder of an Englishman; the great symbol of equality in those ages.

THE king, after rebuilding the ruined cities, particularly London [f], which had been destroyed by the Danes in the reign of Ethelwolf, established a regular militia for the defence of the kingdom. He ordained that all his people should be armed and registered; he assigned them a regular rotation of duty; he distributed part into the castles and fortresses, which he built at proper places [g]; he required another part to take the field on any alarm, and to assemble at stated places of rendezvous; and he left a sufficient number at home, who were employed in the cultivation of the land, and who afterwards took their turn in military service [h]. The whole kingdom was like one great garrison; and the Danes could no sooner appear in one place, than a sufficient number was assembled to oppose them, without leaving the other quarters defenceless or disarmed [i].

BUT Alfred, sensible that the proper method of opposing an enemy, who made incursions by sea, was to meet them on their own element, took care to provide himself with a naval force [k], which, though the most natural defence of an island, had hitherto been totally neglected by the English. He increased the shipping of his kingdom both in number and strength, and trained his subjects in the

f Asser. p. 15. Chron. Sax. p. 88. M. West. p. 171. Simeon Dunelm. p. 131. Brompton. p. 812. Allured Beverl. ex. edit. Hearne, p. 106. g Asser. p. 18. Ingulf, p. 27. h Chron. Sax. p. 92, 93. i Spelman's life of Alfred, p. 147. edit. 1709. k Asser. p. 9. M. West. p. 179.

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practice, as well of sailing, as of naval action. He distributed his armed vessels in proper stations round the island, and was sure to meet the Danish ships either before or after they had landed their troops, and to pursue them in all their incursions. Though the Danes might suddenly, by surprise, disembark on the coast, which was generally become desolate by their frequent ravages, they were encountered by the English fleet in their retreat; and escaped not, as formerly, by abandoning their booty, but paid, by their total destruction, the penalty of the disorders which they had committed.

In this manner Alfred repelled several inroads of these piratical Danes, and maintained his kingdom, during some years, in safety and tranquillity. A fleet of a hundred and twenty ships of war was stationed upon the coast; and being provided with warlike engines, as well as with expert seamen, both Frisians and English (for Alfred supplied the defects of his own subjects by engaging able foreigners in his service), maintained a superiority over those smaller bands, with which England had so often
893. been infested[1]. But at last Hastings, the famous Danish chief, having ravaged all the provinces of France, both along the sea-coast and the Loire and Seine, and being obliged to quit that country, more by the desolation which he himself had occasioned, than by the resistance of the inhabitants, appeared off the coast of Kent with a fleet of 330 sail. The greater part of the enemy disembarked in the Rother, and seized the fort of Apuldore. Hastings himself, commanding a fleet of eighty sail, entered the Thames, and fortifying Milton in Kent, began to spread his forces over the country, and to commit the most destructive ravages. But Alfred, on the first alarm of this descent, flew to the defence of his people, at the head of a select band of soldiers,

[1] Asser. p. 11. Chron Sax. p. 86, 87. M. West. p. 176.

whom

whom he always kept about his person[m]; and gathering to him the armed militia from all quarters, appeared in the field with a force superior to the enemy. All straggling parties, whom necessity, or love of plunder, had drawn to a distance from their chief encampment, were cut off by the English[n]; and these pirates, instead of increasing their spoil, found themselves cooped up in their fortifications, and obliged to subsist by the plunder which they had brought from France. Tired of this situation, which must in the end prove ruinous to them, the Danes at Apuldore rose suddenly from their encampment, with an intention of marching towards the Thames, and passing over into Essex: But they escaped not the vigilance of Alfred, who encountered them at Farnham, put them to rout[o], seized all their horses and baggage, and chased the runaways on board their ships, which carried them up the Colne to Mersey in Essex, where they entrenched themselves. Hastings at the same time, and probably by concert, made a like movement; and deserting Milton, took possession of Bamflete, near the Isle of Canvey in the same county[p]; where he hastily threw up fortifications for his defence against the power of Alfred.

Unfortunately for the English, Guthrum, prince of the East-Anglian Danes, was now dead; as was also Guthred, whom the king had appointed governor of the Northumbrians; and those restless tribes, being no longer restrained by the anthority of their princes, and being encouraged by the appearance of so great a body of their countrymen, broke into rebellion, shook off the authority of Alfred, and yielding to their inveterate habits of war and depredation[q], embarked on board two hundred and forty vessels, and appeared before Exeter in the west of England. Alfred lost not a moment in op-

[m] Asser. p. 19. [n] Chron. Sax. p. 92. [o] Ibid. p. 93. Flor. Wigorn. p. 595. [p] Chron. Sax. p. 93. [q] Ibid. p. 92.

posing this new enemy. Having left some forces at London to make head against Hastings and the other Danes, he marched suddenly to the west[r]; and falling on the rebels before they were aware, pursued them to their ships with great slaughter. These ravagers sailing next to Sussex, began to plunder the country near Chichester; but the order which Alfred had every where established, sufficed here, without his presence, for the defence of the place; and the rebels meeting with a new repulse, in which many of them were killed, and some of their ships taken[s], were obliged to put again to sea, and were discouraged from attempting any other enterprise.

Meanwhile, the Danish invaders in Essex, having united their force under the command of Hastings, advanced into the inland country, and made spoil of all around them; but soon had reason to repent of their temerity. The English army left in London, assisted by a body of the citizens, attacked the enemy's entrenchments at Bamflete, overpowered the garrison, and having done great execution upon them, carried off the wife and two sons of Hastings[t]. Alfred generously spared these captives; and even restored them to Hastings[u], on condition that he should depart the kingdom.

But though the king had thus honourably rid himself of this dangerous enemy, he had not entirely subdued or expelled the invaders. The piratical Danes willingly followed in an excursion any prosperous leader who gave them hopes of booty; but were not so easily induced to relinquish their enterprise, or submit to return, baffled and without plunder, into their native country. Great numbers of them, after the departure of Hastings, seized and fortified Shobury at the mouth of the Thames; and

r Chron. Sax. p. 93. s Ibid. p. 96. Flor. Wigorn. p. 596. t Chron. Sax. p. 94. M. West. p. 178. u M. West. p. 179.

having

having left a garrison there, they marched along the river, till they came to Boddington in the county of Glocester; where, being reinforced by some Welsh, they threw up entrenchments, and prepared for their defence. The king here surrounded them with the whole force of his dominions[w]; and as he had now a certain prospect of victory, he resolved to trust nothing to chance, but rather to master his enemies by famine than assault. They were reduced to such extremities, that, having eaten their own horses, and having many of them perished with hunger[x], they made a desperate sally upon the English; and though the greater number fell in the action, a considerable body made their escape[y]. These roved about for some time in England, still pursued by the vigilance of Alfred; they attacked Leicester with success, defended themselves in Hartford, and then fled to Quatford, where they were finally broken and subdued. The small remains of them either dispersed themselves among their countrymen in Northumberland and East-Anglia[z], or had recourse again to the sea, where they exercised piracy, under the command of Sigefert, a Northumbrian. This freebooter, well acquainted with Alfred's naval preparations, had framed vessels of a new construction, higher, and longer, and swifter, than those of the English; but the king soon discovered his superior skill, by building vessels still higher, and longer, and swifter, than those of the Northumbrians; and falling upon them, while they were exercising their ravages in the west, he took twenty of their ships; and having tried all the prisoners at Winchester, he hanged them as pirates, the common enemies of mankind.

THE well-timed severity of this execution, together with the excellent posture of defence established

[w] Chron. Sax. p 94. [x] Ibid. M. West. p. 179. Flor. Wigorn. p. 596. [y] Chron. Sax. p 95. [z] Ibid. p. 97.

every

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901. the frontiers of Scotland; when he died, in the vigour of his age and the full ſtrength of his faculties, after a glorious reign of twenty-nine years and a half [b]; in which he deſervedly attained the appellation of Alfred the Great, and the title of Founder of the Engliſh monarchy.

The merit of this prince, both in private and public life, may with advantage be ſet in oppoſition to that of any monarch or citizen which the annals of any age or any nation can preſent to us. He ſeems indeed to be the model of that perfect character, which, under the denomination of a ſage or wiſe man, philoſophers have been fond of delineating, rather as a fiction of their imagination, than in hopes of ever ſeeing it really exiſting: So happily were all his virtues tempered together; ſo juſtly were they blended; and ſo powerfully did each prevent the other from exceeding its proper boundaries! He knew how to reconcile the moſt enterpriſing ſpirit with the cooleſt moderation; the moſt obſtinate perſeverance with the eaſieſt flexibility; the moſt ſevere juſtice with the gentleſt lenity; the greateſt vigour in commanding with the moſt perfect affability of deportment [c]; the higheſt capacity

[a] Flor. Wigorn. p. 598. [b] Aſſer. p. 21. Chron. Sax. p. 99. [c] Aſſer. p. 13.

and

and inclination for ſcience, with the moſt ſhining talents for action. His civil and military virtues are almoſt equally the objects of our admiration; excepting only, that the former, being more rare among princes, as well as more uſeful, ſeem chiefly to challenge our applauſe. Nature alſo, as if deſirous that ſo bright a production of her ſkill ſhould be ſet in the faireſt light, had beſtowed on him every bodily accompliſhment, vigour of limbs, dignity of ſhape and air, with a pleaſing, engaging, and open countenance[e]. Fortune alone, by throwing him into that barbarous age, deprived him of hiſtorians worthy to tranſmit his fame to poſterity; and we wiſh to ſee him delineated in more lively colours, and with more particular ſtrokes, that we may at leaſt perceive ſome of thoſe ſmall ſpecks and blemiſhes, from which, as a man, it is impoſſible he could be entirely exempted.

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But we ſhould give but an imperfect idea of Alfred's merit, were we to confine our narration to his military exploits, and were not more particular in our account of his inſtitutions for the execution of juſtice, and of his zeal for the encouragement of arts and ſciences.

After Alfred had ſubdued, and had ſettled or expelled the Danes, he found the kingdom in the moſt wretched condition; deſolated by the ravages of thoſe barbarians, and thrown into diſorders, which were calculated to perpetuate its miſery. Though the great armies of the Danes were broken, the country was full of ſtraggling troops of that nation, who, being accuſtomed to live by plunder, were become incapable of induſtry; and who, from the natural ferocity of their manners, indulged themſelves in committing violence, even beyond what was requiſite to ſupply their neceſſities. The Eng-

e Aſſer. p. 5.

liſh

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lish themselves, reduced to the most extreme indigence by these continued depredations, had shaken off all bands of government; and those who had been plundered to-day, betook themselves next day to the like disorderly life, and, from despair, joined the robbers in pillaging and ruining their fellow-citizens. These were the evils for which it was necessary that the vigilance and activity of Alfred should provide a remedy.

THAT he might render the execution of justice strict and regular, he divided all England into counties; these counties he subdivided into hundreds; and the hundreds into tithings. Every householder was answerable for the behaviour of his family and slaves, and even of his guests, if they lived above three days in his house. Ten neighbouring householders were formed into one corporation, who, under the name of a tithing, decennary, or fribourg, were answerable for each other's conduct, and over whom one person, called a tithingman, headbourg, or borsholder, was appointed to preside. Every man was punished as an outlaw, who did not register himself in some tithing. And no man could change his habitation, without a warrant or certificate from the borsholder of the tithing to which he formerly belonged.

WHEN any person in any tithing or decennary was guilty of a crime, the borsholder was summoned to answer for him; and if he were not willing to be surety for his appearance, and his clearing himself, the criminal was committed to prison, and there detained till his trial. If he fled, either before or after finding sureties, the borsholder and decennary became liable to enquiry, and were exposed to the penalties of law. Thirty-one days were allowed them for producing the criminal; and if the time elapsed without their being able to find him, the borsholder, with two other members

of

of the decennary, was obliged to appear, and, together with three chief members of the three neighbouring decennaries (making twelve in all), to ſwear that his decennary was free from all privity both of the crime committed, and of the eſcape of the criminal. If the borſholder could not find ſuch a number to anſwer for their innocence, the decennary was compelled by fine to make ſatisfaction to the king, according to the degree of the offence[f]. By this inſtitution every man was obliged from his own intereſt to keep a watchful eye over the conduct of his neighbours; and was in a manner ſurety for the behaviour of thoſe who were placed under the diviſion to which he belonged: Whence theſe decennaries received the name of frank-pledges.

SUCH a regular diſtribution of the people, with ſuch a ſtrict confinement in their habitation, may not be neceſſary in times when men are more enured to obedience and juſtice; and it might perhaps be regarded as deſtructive of liberty and commerce in a poliſhed ſtate; but it was well calculated to reduce that fierce and licentious people under the ſalutary reſtraint of law and government. But Alfred took care to temper theſe rigours by other inſtitutions favourable to the freedom of the citizens; and nothing could be more popular and liberal than his plan for the adminiſtration of juſtice. The borſholder ſummoned together his whole decennary to aſſiſt him in deciding any leſſer difference which occurred among the members of this ſmall community. In affairs of greater moment, in appeals from the decennary, or in controverſies ariſing between members of different decennaries, the cauſe was brought before the hundred, which conſiſted of ten decennaries, or a hundred families of freemen, and which was regularly aſſembled once in four weeks for the deciding of cauſes[g]. Their me-

[f] Leges St. Edw. cap. 20. apud Wilkins, p. 202. [g] Leg. Edw. cap. 2.

thod

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thod of decifion deferves to be noted, as being the origin of juries; an inftitution, admirable in itfelf, and the beft calculated for the prefervation of liberty and the adminiftration of juftice, that ever was devifed by the wit of man. Twelve freeholders were chofen; who, having fworn, together with the hundreder, or prefiding magiftrate of that divifion, to adminifter impartial juftice [h], proceeded to the examination of that caufe which was fubmitted to their jurifdiction. And befide thefe monthly meetings of the hundred, there was an annual meeting, appointed for a more general infpection of the police of the diftrict; for the enquiry into crimes, the correction of abufes in magiftrates, and the obliging of every perfon to fhew the decennary in which he was regiftered. The people, in imitation of their anceftors, the ancient Germans, affembled there in arms; whence a hundred was fometimes called a wapentake, and its court ferved both for the fupport of military difcipline, and for the adminiftration of civil juftice [i].

The next fuperior court to that of the hundred was the county-court, which met twice a year, after Michaelmas and Eafter, and confifted of the freeholders of the county, who poffeffed an equal vote in the decifion of caufes. The bifhop prefided in this court, together with the alderman; and the proper object of the court was the receiving of appeals from the hundreds and decennaries, and the deciding of fuch controverfies as arofe between men of different hundreds. Formerly, the alderman poffeffed both the civil and military authority; but Alfred, fenfible that this conjunction of powers rendered the nobility dangerous and independent, appointed alfo a fheriff in each county, who enjoyed a co-ordinate authority with the former in the judicial

[h] Fœdus Alfred, and Gothurn, apud Wilkins, cap. 3. p. 47. Leg. Ethelftani, cap. 2. apud Wilkins, p. 58. LL. Ethelr. § 4. Wilkins, p. 117.

[i] Spelman, *in voce* Wapentake.

function.

function[k]. His office alſo impowered him to guard the rights of the crown in the county, and to levy the fines impoſed; which in that age formed no contemptible part of the public revenue.

THERE lay an appeal, in default of juſtice, from all theſe courts to the king himſelf in council; and as the people, ſenſible of the equity and great talents of Alfred, placed their chief confidence in him, he was ſoon overwhelmed with appeals from all parts of England. He was indefatigable in the diſpatch of theſe cauſes[l]; but finding that his time muſt be entirely engroſſed by this branch of duty, he reſolved to obviate the inconvenience, by correcting the ignorance or corruption of the inferior magiſtrates, from which it aroſe[m]. He took care to have his nobility inſtructed in letters and the law[n]: He choſe the earls and ſheriffs from among the men moſt celebrated for probity and knowledge: He puniſhed ſeverely all malverſation in office[o]: And he removed all the earls, whom he found unequal to the truſt[p]; allowing only ſome of the more elderly to ſerve by a deputy, till their death ſhould make room for more worthy ſucceſſors.

THE better to guide the magiſtrates in the adminiſtration of juſtice, Alfred framed a body of laws; which, though now loſt, ſerved long as the baſis of Engliſh juriſprudence, and is generally deemed the origin of what is denominated the COMMON LAW. He appointed regular meetings of the ſtates of England twice a year in London[q]; a city which he himſelf had repaired and beautified, and which he thus rendered the capital of the kingdom. The ſimilarity of theſe inſtitutions to the cuſtoms of the ancient Germans, to the practice of the other northern conquerors, and to the Saxon laws during the Heptarchy,

[k] Ingulf. p. 870. [l] Aſſer. p. 20. [m] Ibid. p. 18. 21. Flor. Wigorn. p. 594. Abbas Rieval, p. 355. [n] Flor. Wigorn. p. 594. Brompton, p. 814. [o] Le Miroir de Juſtice, chap. 2. [p] Aſſer. p. 20. [q] Le Miroir de Juſtice.

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tarchy, prevents us from regarding Alfred as the sole author of this plan of government; and leads us rather to think, that, like a wise man, he contented himself with reforming, extending, and executing the institutions which he found previously established. But, on the whole, such success attended his legislation, that every thing bore suddenly a new face in England: Robberies and iniquities of all kinds were repressed by the punishment or reformation of the criminals[r]: And so exact was the general police, that Alfred, it is said, hung up, by way of bravado, golden bracelets near the highways; and no man dared to touch them[s]. Yet, amidst these rigours of justice, this great prince preserved the most sacred regard to the liberty of his people; and it is a memorable sentiment preserved in his will, that it was just the English should for ever remain as free as their own thoughts[t].

As good morals and knowledge are almost inseparable, in every age, though not in every individual; the care of Alfred for the encouragement of learning among his subjects, was another useful branch of his legislation, and tended to reclaim the English from their former dissolute and ferocious manners: But the king was guided in this pursuit, less by political views, than by his natural bent and propensity towards letters. When he came to the throne, he found the nation sunk into the grossest ignorance and barbarism, proceeding from the continued disorders in the government, and from the ravages of the Danes: The monasteries were destroyed, the monks butchered or dispersed, their libraries burnt; and thus the only seats of erudition in those ages were totally subverted. Alfred himself complains, that on his accession he knew not one person, south of the Thames, who could so much as interpret the Latin service; and very few

[r] Ingulf, p. 27. [s] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 4. [t] Asser. p. 24.

in

in the northern parts, who had even reached that pitch of erudition. But this prince invited over the most celebrated scholars from all parts of Europe; he established schools every where for the instruction of his people; he founded, at least repaired, the university of Oxford, and endowed it with many privileges, revenues, and immunities; he enjoined by law all freeholders possessed of two hydes [u] of land or more to send their children to school for their instruction; he gave preferment both in church and state to such only as had made some proficiency in knowledge: And by all these expedients he had the satisfaction, before his death, to see a great change in the face of affairs; and in a work of his, which is still extant, he congratulates himself on the progress which learning, under his patronage, had already made in England. CHAP. II.

BUT the most effectual expedient, employed by Alfred, for the encouragement of learning, was his own example, and the constant assiduity with which, notwithstanding the multiplicity and urgency of his affairs, he employed himself in the pursuits of knowledge. He usually divided his time into three equal portions: One was employed in sleep, and the refection of his body by diet and exercise; another in the dispatch of business; a third in study and devotion; and that he might more exactly measure the hours, he made use of burning tapers of equal length, which he fixed in lanthorns [w]; an expedient suited to that rude age, when the geometry of dialling, and the mechanism of clocks and watches, were totally unknown. And by such a regular distribution of his time, though he often laboured under great bodily infirmities [x], this martial hero, who fought in person fifty-six battles by sea

[u] A hyde contained land sufficient to employ one plough. See H. Hunt. lib. 6. in A. D. 1008. Annal. Waverl. in A. D. 1083. Gervase of Tilbury says, it commonly contained about 100 acres.

[w] Asser. p. 20. W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4. Ingulf, p. 870.

[x] Asser. p. 4. 12, 13. 17.

 and

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and land [y], was able, during a life of no extraordinary length, to acquire more knowledge, and even to compose more books, than most studious men, though blessed with the greatest leisure and application, have, in more fortunate ages, made the object of their uninterrupted industry.

SENSIBLE that the people, at all times, especially when their understandings are obstructed by ignorance and bad education, are not much susceptible of speculative instruction, Alfred endeavoured to convey his morality by apologues, parables, stories, apophthegms, couched in poetry; and besides propagating, among his subjects, former compositions of that kind, which he found in the Saxon tongue [z], he exercised his genius in inventing works of a like nature [a], as well as in translating from the Greek the elegant fables of Æsop. He also gave Saxon translations of Orosius's and Bede's histories; and of Boethius concerning the consolation of philosophy [b]. And he deemed it nowise derogatory from his other great characters of sovereign, legislator, warrior, and politician, thus to lead the way to his people in the pursuits of literature.

MEANWHILE, this prince was not negligent in encouraging the vulgar and mechanical arts, which have a more sensible, though not a closer, connection with the interests of society. He invited, from all quarters, industrious foreigners to repeople his country, which had been desolated by the ravages of the Danes [c]. He introduced and encouraged manufactures of all kinds; and no inventor or improver of any ingenious art did he suffer to go unrewarded [d]. He prompted men of activity to betake themselves to navigation, to push commerce into the most remote countries, and to acquire riches by propagating

[y] W. Malm. lib. 4. cap. 4. [z] Asser. p. 13. [a] Spelman, p. 124. Abbas Rieval, p. 355. [b] W. Malm. lib. ii. cap. 4. Brompton, p. 814. [c] Asser. p. 13. Flor. Wigorn. p. 588. [d] Asser. p. 20.

industry

industry among their fellow-citizens. He set apart a seventh portion of his own revenue for maintaining a number of workmen, whom he constantly employed in rebuilding the ruined cities, castles, palaces, and monasteries[e]. Even the elegancies of life were brought to him from the Mediterranean and the Indies[f]; and his subjects, by seeing those productions of the peaceful arts, were taught to respect the virtues of justice and industry, from which alone they could arise. Both living and dead, Alfred was regarded by foreigners, no less than by his own subjects, as the greatest prince after Charlemagne that had appeared in Europe during several ages, and as one of the wisest and best that ever adorned the annals of any nation. CHAP. II.

ALFRED had, by his wife, Ethelswitha, daughter of a Mercian earl, three sons and three daughters. The eldest son, Edmund, died without issue, in his father's lifetime. The third, Ethelward, inherited his father's passion for letters, and lived a private life. The second, Edward, succeeded to his power; and passes by the appellation of Edward the Elder, being the first of that name who sat on the English throne.

EDWARD the Elder.

THIS prince, who equalled his father in military talents, though inferior to him in knowledge and erudition[g], found immediately on his accession, a specimen of that turbulent life to which all princes, and even all individuals, were exposed, in an age when men, less restrained by law or justice, and less occupied by industry, had no aliment for their inquietude, but wars, insurrections, convulsions, rapine, and depredation. Ethelwald, his cousin-german, son of king Ethelbert, the elder 901.

[e] Asser. p. 20. W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 4. [f] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 4. [g] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 5. Hoveden, p. 421.

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brother of Alfred, insisted on a preferable title[h]; and arming his partizans, took possession of Winbourne, where he seemed determined to defend himself to the last extremity, and to wait the issue of his pretensions[i]. But when the king approached the town with a great army, Ethelwald, having the prospect of certain destruction, made his escape, and fled first into Normandy, then into Northumberland; where he hoped that the people who had been recently subdued by Alfred, and who were impatient of peace, would on the intelligence of that great prince's death, seize the first pretence or opportunity of rebellion. The event did not disappoint his expectations: The Northumbrians declared for him[k]; and Ethelwald having thus connected his interests with the Danish tribes, went beyond sea, and collecting a body of these freebooters, he excited the hopes of all those who had been accustomed to subsist by rapine and violence[l]. The East-Anglian Danes joined his party: The Five-burgers, who were seated in the heart of Mercia, began to put themselves in motion; and the English found that they were again menaced with those convulsions, from which the valour and policy of Alfred had so lately rescued them. The rebels, headed by Ethelwald, made an incursion into the counties of Glocester, Oxford, and Wilts; and having exercised their ravages in these places, they retired with their booty, before the king, who had assembled an army, was able to approach them. Edward, however, who was determined that his preparations should not be fruitless, conducted his forces into East-Anglia, and retaliated the injuries which the inhabitants had committed, by spreading the like devastation among them. Satiated with revenge, and loaded with booty, he gave orders to retire: But the authority

[h] Chron. Sax. p. 99, 100. [i] Ibid. p. 100. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 352. [k] Chron. Sax. p. 100. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 352. [l] Chron. Sax. p. 100. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 24.

of thoſe ancient kings, which was feeble in peace, was not much better eſtabliſhed in the field; and the Kentiſh men, greedy of more ſpoil, ventured, contrary to repeated orders, to ſtay behind him, and to take up their quarters in Bury. This diſobedience proved in the iſſue fortunate to Edward. The Danes aſſaulted the Kentiſh men; but met with ſo vigorous a reſiſtance, that, though they gained the field of battle, they bought that advantage by the loſs of their braveſt leaders, and among the reſt, by that of Ethelwald, who periſhed in the action[m]. The king, freed from the fear of ſo dangerous a competitor, made peace on advantageous terms with the Eaſt-Angles[n].

In order to reſtore England to ſuch a ſtate of tranquillity as it was then capable of attaining, nought was wanting but the ſubjection of the Northumbrians, who, aſſiſted by the ſcattered Danes in Mercia, continually infeſted the bowels of the kingdom. Edward, in order to divert the force of theſe enemies, prepared a fleet to attack them by ſea; hoping that when his ſhips appeared on their coaſt, they muſt at leaſt remain at home, and provide for their defence. But the Northumbrians were leſs anxious to ſecure their own property, than greedy to commit ſpoil on their enemy; and concluding, that the chief ſtrength of the Engliſh was embarked on board the fleet, they thought the opportunity favourable, and entered Edward's territories with all their forces. The king, who was prepared againſt this event, attacked them on their return at Tetenhall in the county of Stafford, put them to rout, recovered all the booty, and purſued them with great ſlaughter into their own country.

All the reſt of Edward's reign was a ſcene of continued and ſucceſsful action againſt the Northumbrians, the Eaſt-Angles, the Five-burgers,

[m] Chron. Sax. p. 101. Brompton, p. 832. [n] Chron. Sax. p. 102. Brompton, p. 832. Matth. Weſt. p. 181.

 and

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and the foreign Danes, who invaded him from Normandy and Britanny. Nor was he leſs provident in putting his kingdom in a poſture of defence, than vigorous in aſſaulting the enemy. He fortified the towns of Cheſter, Eddeſbury, Warwick, Cherbury, Buckingham, Towceſter, Maldon, Huntingdon, and Colcheſter. He fought two ſignal battles at Temsford and Maldon [o]. He vanquiſhed Thurketill, a great Daniſh chief, and obliged him to retire with his followers into France, in queſt of ſpoil and adventures. He ſubdued the Eaſt-Angles, and forced them to ſwear allegiance to him: He expelled the two rival princes of Northumberland, Reginald and Sidroc, and acquired, for the preſent, the dominions of that province: Several tribes of the Britons were ſubjected by him; and even the Scots, who, during the reign of Egbert, had, under the conduct of Kenneth, their king, increaſed their power by the final ſubjection of the Picts, were nevertheleſs obliged to give him marks of ſubmiſſion [p]. In all theſe fortunate atchievements he was aſſiſted by the activity and prudence of his ſiſter Ethelfleda, who was widow of Ethelbert, earl of Mercia, and who, after her huſband's death, retained the government of that province. This princeſs, who had been reduced to extremity in child-bed, refuſed afterwards all commerce with her huſband; not from any weak ſuperſtition, as was common in that age, but becauſe ſhe deemed all domeſtic occupations unworthy of her maſculine and ambitious ſpirit [q]. She died before her brother; and Edward, during the remainder of his reign, took upon himſelf the immediate government of Mercia, which before had been entruſted to the authority of a governor [r]. The Saxon Chronicle

[o] Chron. Sax. p. 108. Flor. Wigorn. p. 601. [p] Chron. Sax. p. 110. Hoveden, p. 421. [q] W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 5. Matth. Weſt. p. 182. Ingulf, p. 28. Higden, p. 261. [r] Chron. Sax. p. 110. Brompton, p. 831.

fixes

fixes the death of this prince in 925[s]: His kingdom devolved to Athelstan, his natural son. CHAP. II.

ATHELSTAN.

THE stain in this prince's birth was not, in those times, deemed so considerable as to exclude him from the throne; and Athelstan, being of an age, as well as of a capacity, fitted for government, obtained the preference to Edward's younger children, who, though legitimate, were of too tender years to rule a nation so much exposed both to foreign invasion and to domestic convulsions. Some discontents, however, prevailed on his accession; and Alfred, a nobleman of considerable power, was thence encouraged to enter into a conspiracy against him. This incident is related by historians with circumstances which the reader, according to the degree of credit he is disposed to give them, may impute either to the invention of monks, who forged them, or to their artifice, who found means of making them real. Alfred, it is said, being seized upon strong suspicions, but without any certain proof, firmly denied the conspiracy imputed to him; and in order to justify himself, he offered to swear to his innocence before the pope, whose person, it was supposed, contained such superior sanctity, that no one could presume to give a false oath in his presence, and yet hope to escape the immediate vengeance of Heaven. The king accepted of the condition, and Alfred was conducted to Rome; where, either conscious of his innocence, or neglecting the superstition to which he appealed, he ventured to make the oath required of him, before John, who then filled the papal chair. But no sooner had he pronounced the fatal words, than he fell into convulsions, of which three days after he expired. The king, as 925.

[s] Page 110.

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if the guilt of the conſpirator were now fully aſcertained, confiſcated his eſtate, and made a preſent of it to the monaſtery of Malmeſbury [t]; ſecure that no doubts would ever thenceforth be entertained concerning the juſtice of his proceedings.

THE dominion of Athelſtan was no ſooner eſtabliſhed over his Engliſh ſubjects, than he endeavoured to give ſecurity to the government, by providing againſt the inſurrections of the Danes, which had created ſo much diſturbance to his predeceſſors. He marched into Northumberland; and finding that the inhabitants bore with impatience the Engliſh yoke, he thought it prudent to confer on Sithric, a Daniſh nobleman, the title of King, and to attach him to his intereſts, by giving him his ſiſter, Editha, in marriage. But this policy proved by accident the ſource of dangerous conſequences. Sithric died in a twelvemonth after; and his two ſons by a former marriage, Anlaf and Godfrid, founding pretenſions on their father's elevation, aſſumed the ſovereignty without waiting for Athelſtan's conſent. They were ſoon expelled by the power of that monarch; and the former took ſhelter in Ireland, as the latter did in Scotland; where he received, during ſome time, protection from Conſtantine, who then enjoyed the crown of that kingdom. The Scottiſh prince, however, continually ſolicited, and even menaced by Athelſtan, at laſt promiſed to deliver up his gueſt; but ſecretly deteſting this treachery, he gave Godfrid warning to make his eſcape [u]; and that fugitive, after ſubſiſting by piracy for ſome years, freed the king, by his death, from any farther anxiety. Athelſtan, reſenting Conſtantine's behaviour, entered Scotland with an army; and ravaging the country with impunity [w], he reduced the Scots to ſuch diſtreſs, that their king was

[t] W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 6. Spell. Conc. p. 407. [u] W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 6. [w] Chron. Sax. p. 111. Hoveden, p. 422. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 354.

content

content to preserve his crown, by making submissions to the enemy. The English historians assert [x], that Constantine did homage to Athelstan for his kingdom; and they add, that the latter prince, being urged by his courtiers to push the present favourable opportunity, and entirely subdue Scotland, replied, that it was more glorious to confer than conquer kingdoms [y]. But those annals, so uncertain and imperfect in themselves, lose all credit, when national prepossessions and animosities have place: And on that account, the Scotch historians, who, without having any more knowledge of the matter, strenuously deny the fact, seem more worthy of belief.

Constantine, whether he owed the retaining of his crown to the moderation of Athelstan, who was unwilling to employ all his advantages against him, or to the policy of that prince, who esteemed the humiliation of an enemy a greater acquisition than the subjection of a discontented and mutinous people, thought the behaviour of the English monarch more an object of resentment than of gratitude. He entered into a confederacy with Anlaf, who had collected a great body of Danish pirates, whom he found hovering in the Irish seas; and with some Welsh princes, who were terrified at the growing power of Athelstan: And all these allies made by concert an irruption with a great army into England. Athelstan, collecting his forces, met the enemy near Brunsbury in Northumberland, and defeated them in a general engagement. This victory was chiefly ascribed to the valour of Turketul, the English chancellor: For in those turbulent ages no one was so much occupied in civil employments, as wholly to lay aside the military character [z].

[x] Hoveden, p. 422. [y] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 6. Anglia Sacra, vol. 1. p. 212. [z] The office of chancellor among the Anglo-Saxons resembled more that of a secretary of state, than that of our present chancellor. See Spellman in voce *Cancellarius*.

THERE is a circumſtance not unworthy of notice, which hiſtorians relate, with regard to the tranſactions of this war. Anlaf, on the approach of the Engliſh army, thought that he could not venture too much to enſure a fortunate event; and employing the artifice formerly practiſed by Alfred againſt the Danes, he entered the enemy's camp in the habit of a minſtrel. The ſtratagem was for the preſent attended with like ſucceſs. He gave ſuch ſatiſfaction to the ſoldiers, who flocked about him, that they introduced him to the king's tent; and Anlaf, having played before that prince and his nobles during their repaſt, was diſmiſſed with a handſome reward. His prudence kept him from refuſing the preſent; but his pride determined him, on his departure, to bury it, while he fancied that he was unespied by all the world. But a ſoldier in Athelſtan's camp, who had formerly ſerved under Anlaf, had been ſtruck with ſome ſuſpicion on the firſt appearance of the minſtrel; and was engaged by curioſity to obſerve all his motions. He regarded this laſt action as a full proof of Anlaf's diſguiſe; and he immediately carried the intelligence to Athelſtan, who blamed him for not ſooner giving him information, that he might have ſeized his enemy. But the ſoldier told him, that, as he had formerly ſworn fealty to Anlaf, he could never have pardoned himſelf the treachery of betraying and ruining his ancient maſter; and that Athelſtan himſelf, after ſuch an inſtance of his criminal conduct, would have had equal reaſon to diſtruſt his allegiance. Athelſtan, having praiſed the generoſity of the ſoldier's principles, reflected on the incident, which he foreſaw might be attended with important conſequences. He removed his ſtation in the camp; and as a biſhop arrived that evening with a reinforcement of troops (for the eccleſiaſtics were then no leſs warlike than the civil magiſtrates), he occupied by his train that very place which had been left vacant by the

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the king's removal. The precaution of Athelstan was found prudent: For no sooner had darkness fallen, than Anlaf broke into the camp, and hastening directly to the place where he had left the king's tent, put the bishop to death before he had time to prepare for his defence [a].

THERE fell several Danish and Welsh princes in the action of Brunsbury [b]; and Constantine and Anlaf made their escape with difficulty, leaving the greater part of their army on the field of battle. After this success, Athelstan enjoyed his crown in tranquillity; and he is regarded as one of the ablest and most active of those ancient princes. He passed a remarkable law, which was calculated for the encouragement of commerce, and which it required some liberality of mind in that age to have devised: That a merchant, who had made three long sea-voyages on his own account, should be admitted to the rank of a thane or gentleman. This prince died at Glocester in the Year 941 [c], after a reign of sixteen years, and was succeeded by Edmund his legitimate brother.

EDMUND.

EDMUND, on his accession, met with disturbance from the restless Northumbrians, who lay in wait for every opportunity of breaking into rebellion. But marching suddenly with his forces into their country, he so overawed the rebels, that they endeavoured to appease him by the most humble submissions [d]. In order to give him the surer pledge of their obedience, they offered to embrace Christianity; a religion which the English Danes had frequently professed, when reduced to difficulties, but which, for that very reason, they regarded as a 941.

[a] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 6. Higden, p. 263. [b] Brompton, p. 839. Ingulf, p. 29. [c] Chron. Sax. p. 114. [d] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 7. Brompton, p. 857.

badge

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badge of servitude, and shook off as soon as a favourable opportunity offered. Edmund, trusting little to their sincerity in this forced submission, used the precaution of removing the Five-burgers from the towns of Mercia, in which they had been allowed to settle; because it was always found, that they took advantage of every commotion, and introduced the rebellious or foreign Danes into the heart of the kingdom. He also conquered Cumberland from the Britons; and conferred that territory on Malcolm king of Scotland, on condition that he should do him homage for it, and protect the north from all future incursions of the Danes.

Edmund was young when he came to the crown; yet was his reign short, as his death was violent. One day as he was solemnizing a festival in the county of Glocester, he remarked, that Leolf, a notorious robber, whom he had sentenced to banishment, had yet the boldness to enter the hall where he himself dined, and to sit at table with his attendants. Enraged at this insolence, he ordered him to leave the room; but on his refusing to obey, the king, whose temper, naturally choleric, was inflamed by this additional insult, leaped on him himself, and seised him by the hair: But the ruffian, pushed to extremity, drew his dagger, and gave Edmund a wound, of which he immediately expired. This event happened in the year 946, and in the sixth year of the king's reign. Edmund left male issue, but so young, that they were incapable of governing the kingdom; and his brother, Edred, was promoted to the throne.

E D R E D.

946. THE reign of this prince, as those of his predecessors, was disturbed by the rebellions and incursions of the Northumbrian Danes, who, though frequently quelled, were never entirely subdued,

nor

nor had ever paid a ſincere allegiance to the crown of England. The acceſſion of a new king ſeemed to them a favourable opportunity for ſhaking off the yoke; but on Edred's appearance with an army, they made him their wonted ſubmiſſions; and the king having waſted the country with fire and ſword, as a puniſhment of their rebellion, obliged them to renew their oaths of allegiance; and he ſtraight retired with his forces. The obedience of the Danes laſted no longer than the preſent terror. Provoked at the devaſtations of Edred, and even reduced by neceſſity to ſubſiſt on plunder, they broke into a new rebellion, and were again ſubdued: But the king, now inſtructed by experience, took greater precautions againſt their future revolt. He fixed Engliſh garriſons in their moſt conſiderable towns; and placed over them an Engliſh governor, who might watch all their motions, and ſuppreſs any inſurrection on its firſt appearance. He obliged alſo Malcolm, king of Scotland, to renew his homage for the lands which he held in England.

Edred, though not unwarlike, nor unfit for active life, lay under the influence of the loweſt ſuperſtition, and had blindly delivered over his conſcience to the guidance of Dunſtan, commonly called St. Dunſtan, abbot of Glaſtenbury, whom he advanced to the higheſt offices, and who covered, under the appearance of ſanctity, the moſt violent and moſt inſolent ambition. Taking advantage of the implicit confidence repoſed in him by the king, this churchman imported into England a new order of monks, who much changed the ſtate of eccleſiaſtical affairs, and excited, on their firſt eſtabliſhment, the moſt violent commotions.

From the introduction of Chriſtianity among the Saxons, there had been monaſteries in England; and theſe eſtabliſhments had extremely multiplied, by the donations of the princes and nobles; whoſe

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superstition, derived from their ignorance and precarious life, and increased by remorses for the crimes into which they were so frequently betrayed, knew no other expedient for appeasing the Deity than a profuse liberality towards the ecclesiastics. But the monks had hitherto been a species of secular priests, who lived after the manner of the present canons or prebendaries, and were both intermingled in some degree with the world, and endeavoured to render themselves useful to it. They were employed in the education of youth[e]: They had the disposal of their own time and industry: They were not subjected to the rigid rules of an order: They had made no vows of implicit obedience to their superiors[f]: And they still retained the choice, without quitting the convent, either of a married or a single life[g]. But a mistaken piety had produced in Italy a new species of monks called Benedictines; who, carrying farther the plausible principles of mortification, secluded themselves entirely from the world, renounced all claim to liberty, and made a merit of the most inviolable chastity. These practices and principles, which superstition at first engendered, were greedily embraced and promoted by the policy of the court of Rome. The Roman pontiff, who was making every day great advances towards an absolute sovereignty over the ecclesiastics, perceived that the celibacy of the clergy alone could break off entirely their connexion with the civil power, and depriving them of every other object of ambition, engage them to promote, with unceasing industry, the grandeur of their own order. He was sensible, that so long as the monks were indulged in marriage, and were permitted to rear families, they never could be subjected to strict discipline, or reduced to that slavery under their

[e] Osberne in Anglia Sacra, tom. 2. p. 92. [f] Osberne, p. 91.

[g] See Wharton's notes to Anglia Sacra, tom. 2. p. 91. Gervase, p. 1645. Chron. Wint. MS. apud Spell. Conc. p. 434.

superiors,

ſuperiors, which was requiſite to procure to the mandates, iſſued from Rome, a ready and zealous obedience. Celibacy, therefore, began to be extolled, as the indiſpenſable duty of prieſts; and the pope undertook to make all the clergy throughout the weſtern world renounce at once the privilege of marriage: A fortunate policy; but at the ſame time an undertaking the moſt difficult of any, ſince he had the ſtrongeſt propenſities of human nature to encounter, and found, that the ſame connexions with the female ſex, which generally encourage devotion, were here unfavourable to the ſucceſs of his project. It is no wonder, therefore, that this maſter-ſtroke of art ſhould have met with violent contradiction, and that the intereſts of the hierarchy, and the inclinations of the prieſts, being now placed in this ſingular oppoſition, ſhould, notwithſtanding the continued efforts of Rome, have retarded the execution of that bold ſcheme during the courſe of near three centuries.

As the biſhops and parochial clergy lived apart with their families, and were more connected with the world, the hopes of ſucceſs with them were fainter, and the pretence for making them renounce marriage was much leſs plauſible. But the pope, having caſt his eye on the monks as the baſis of his authority, was determined to reduce them under ſtrict rules of obedience, to procure them the credit of ſanctity by an appearance of the moſt rigid mortification, and to break off all their other ties which might interfere with his ſpiritual policy. Under pretence, therefore, of reforming abuſes, which were, in ſome degree, unavoidable in the ancient eſtabliſhments, he had already ſpread over the ſouthern countries of Europe the ſevere laws of the monaſtic life, and began to form attempts towards a like innovation in England. The favourable opportunity offered itſelf (and it was greedily ſeized),

CHAP. II. arising from the weak superstition of Edred, and the violent impetuous character of Dunstan.

DUNSTAN was born of noble parents in the west of England; and being educated under his uncle Aldhelm, then archbishop of Canterbury, had betaken himself to the ecclesiastical life, and had acquired some character in the court of Edmund. He was, however, represented to that prince as a man of licentious manners[h]: And finding his fortune blasted by these suspicions, his ardent ambition prompted him to repair his indiscretions, by running into an opposite extreme. He secluded himself entirely from the world; he framed a cell so small, that he could neither stand erect in it, nor stretch out his limbs during his repose; and he here employed himself perpetually either in devotion or in manual labour[i]. It is probable, that his brain became gradually crazed by these solitary occupations, and that his head was filled with chimeras, which being believed by himself and his stupid votaries, procured him the general character of sanctity among the people. He fancied that the devil, among the frequent visits which he paid him, was one day more earnest than usual in his temptations; till Dunstan, provoked at his importunity, seized him by the nose with a pair of red-hot pincers, as he put his head into the cell; and he held him there, till that malignant spirit made the whole neighbourhood resound with his bellowings. This notable exploit was seriously credited and extolled by the public; it is transmitted to posterity by one who, considering the age in which he lived, may pass for a writer of some elegance[k]; and it ensured to Dunstan a reputation which no real piety, much less virtue, could, even in the most enlightened period, have ever procured him with the people.

h Osberne, p. 95. Matth. West. p. 187. i Osberne, p. 96.
k Osberne, p. 97.

SUPPORTED

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SUPPORTED by the character obtained in his retreat, Dunstan appeared again in the world; and gained such an ascendant over Edred, who had succeeded to the crown, as made him not only the director of that prince's conscience, but his counsellor in the most momentous affairs of government. He was placed at the head of the treasury[l], and being thus possessed both of power at court, and of credit with the populace, he was enabled to attempt with success the most arduous enterprises. Finding that his advancement had been owing to the opinion of his austerity, he professed himself a partizan of the rigid monastic rules; and after introducing that reformation into the convents of Glastenbury and Abingdon, he endeavoured to render it universal in the kingdom.

THE minds of men were already well prepared for this innovation. The praises of an inviolable chastity had been carried to the highest extravagance by some of the first preachers of Christianity among the Saxons: The pleasures of love had been represented as incompatible with Christian perfection: And a total abstinence from all commerce with the sex was deemed such a meritorious penance, as was sufficient to atone for the greatest enormities. The consequence seemed natural, that those, at least, who officiated at the altar should be clear of this pollution; and when the doctrine of transubstantiation, which was now creeping in[m], was once fully established, the reverence to the real body of Christ in the eucharist bestowed on this argument an additional force and influence. The monks knew how to avail themselves of all these popular topics, and to set off their own character to the best advantage. They affected the greatest austerity of life and manners: They indulged themselves in the highest strains of devotion: They inveighed bitterly against

[l] Osberne, p. 102. Wallingford, p. 541. [m] Spell. Conc. vol. i. p. 452.

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the vices and pretended luxury of the age: They were particularly vehement against the dissolute lives of the secular clergy, their rivals: Every instance of libertinism in any individual of that order was represented as a general corruption: And where other topics of defamation were wanting, their marriage became a sure subject of invective, and their wives received the name of *concubine*, or other more opprobrious appellation. The secular clergy, on the other hand, who were numerous and rich, and possessed of the ecclesiastical dignities, defended themselves with vigour, and endeavoured to retaliate upon their adversaries. The people were thrown into agitation; and few instances occur of more violent dissensions, excited by the most material differences in religion, or rather the most frivolous: Since it is a just remark, that the more affinity there is between theological parties, the greater commonly is their animosity.

THE progress of the monks, which was become considerable, was somewhat retarded by the death of Edred, their partisan, who expired after a reign of nine years [n]. He left children; but as they were infants, his nephew Edwy, son of Edmund, was placed on the throne.

EDWY.

955. EDWY, at the time of his accession, was not above sixteen or seventeen years of age, was possessed of the most amiable figure, and was even endowed, according to authentic accounts, with the most promising virtues [o]. He would have been the favourite of his people, had he not unhappily, at the commencement of his reign, been engaged in a controversy with the monks, whose rage neither the graces of the body nor virtues of the mind could mitigate,

[n] Chron. Sax. p. 115. [o] H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 356.

and

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and who have pursued his memory with the same unrelenting vengeance, which they exercised against his person and dignity during his short and unfortunate reign. There was a beautiful princess of the royal blood, called Elgiva, who had made impression on the tender heart of Edwy; and as he was of an age when the force of the passions first begins to be felt, he had ventured, contrary to the advice of his gravest counsellors, and the remonstrances of the more dignified ecclesiastics[p], to espouse her; though she was within the degrees of affinity prohibited by the canon law[q]. As the austerity, affected by the monks, made them particularly violent on this occasion, Edwy entertained a strong prepossession against them; and seemed, on that account, determined not to second their project of expelling the seculars from all the convents, and of possessing themselves of those rich establishments. War was therefore declared between the king and the monks; and the former soon found reason to repent his provoking such dangerous enemies. On the day of his coronation, his nobility were assembled in a great hall, and were indulging themselves in that riot and disorder, which, from the example of their German ancestors, had become habitual to the English[r]; when Edwy, attracted by softer pleasures, retired into the queen's apartment, and in that privacy gave reins to his fondness towards his wife, which was only moderately checked by the presence of her mother. Dunstan conjectured the reason of the king's retreat; and carrying along with him Odo, archbishop of Canterbury, over whom he had gained an absolute ascendant, he burst into the apartment, upbraided Edwy with his lasciviousness, probably bestowed on the queen the most opprobrious epithet that can be applied to her sex, and tearing him from her arms, pushed him back,

[p] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 7. [q] Ibid. [r] Wallingford. p. 542.

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in a disgraceful manner, into the banquet of the nobles[s]. Edwy, though young, and opposed by the prejudices of the people, found an opportunity of taking revenge for this public insult. He questioned Dunstan concerning the administration of the treasury during the reign of his predecessor[t]; and when that minister refused to give any account of money expended, as he affirmed by orders of the late king, he accused him of malversation in his office, and banished him the kingdom. But Dunstan's cabal was not unactive during his absence: They filled the public with high panegyrics on his sanctity: They exclaimed against the impiety of the king and queen: And having poisoned the minds of the people by these declamations, they proceeded to still more outrageous acts of violence against the royal authority. Archbishop Odo sent into the palace a party of soldiers, who seized the queen; and having burned her face with a red-hot iron, in order to destroy that fatal beauty which had seduced Edwy, they carried her by force into Ireland, there to remain in perpetual exile[u]. Edwy finding it in vain to resist, was obliged to consent to his divorce, which was pronounced by Odo[w]; and a catastrophe, still more dismal, awaited the unhappy Elgiva. That amiable princess, being cured of her wounds, and having even obliterated the scars with which Odo had hoped to deface her beauty, returned into England, and was flying to the embraces of the king, whom she still regarded as her husband; when she fell into the hands of a party, whom the primate had sent to intercept her. Nothing but her death could now give security to Odo and the monks; and the most cruel death was requisite to satiate their vengeance. Se was hamstringed; and

[s] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 7. Osberne, p. 83. 105. M. West. p. 195, 196. [t] Wallingford, p. 542. Alur. Beverl. p. 112. [u] Osberne, p. 84. Gervase, p. 1644. [w] Hoveden, p. 425.

expired

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expired a few days after at Glocester in the most acute torments [x].

The English, blinded with superstition, instead of being shocked with this inhumanity, exclaimed that the misfortunes of Edwy and his consort were a just judgement for their dissolute contempt of the ecclesiastical statutes. They even proceeded to rebellion against their sovereign; and having placed Edgar at their head, the younger brother of Edwy, a boy of thirteen years of age, they soon put him in possession of Mercia, Northumberland, East-Anglia; and chased Edwy into the southern counties. That it might not be doubtful at whose instigation this revolt was undertaken, Dunstan returned into England, and took upon him the government of Edgar and his party. He was first installed in the see of Worcester, then in that of London [y], and, on Odo's death, and the violent expulsion of Brithelm, his successor, in that of Canterbury [z]; of all which he long kept possession. Odo is transmitted to us by the monks under the character of a man of piety: Dunstan was even canonized; and is one of those numerous saints of the same stamp who disgrace the Romish calendar. Meanwhile the unhappy Edwy was excommunicated [a], and pursued with unrelenting vengeance; but his death, which happened soon after, freed his enemies from all farther inquietude, and gave Edgar peaceable possession of the government *.

EDGAR.

THIS prince, who mounted the throne in such early youth, soon discovered an excellent capacity in the administration of affairs; and his reign is

[x] Osberne, p. 84. Gervase, p. 1645, 1646. [y] Chron. Sax. p. 117. Flor. Wigorn. p. 605. Wallingford, p. 544.
[z] Hoveden. p. 425. Osberne, p. 109. [a] Brompton, p. 863.
* See note [B] at the end of the volume.

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one of the most fortunate that we meet with in the ancient English history. He showed no aversion to war; he made the wisest preparations against invaders: And by this vigour and foresight he was enabled, without any danger of suffering insults, to indulge his inclination towards peace, and to employ himself in supporting and improving the internal government of his kingdom. He maintained a body of disciplined troops; which he quartered in the north, in order to keep the mutinous Northumbrians in subjection, and to repel the inroads of the Scots. He built and supported a powerful navy [b]; and that he might retain the seamen in the practice of their duty, and always present a formidable armament to his enemies, he stationed three squadrons off the coast, and ordered them to make, from time to time, the circuit of his dominions *. The foreign Danes dared not to approach a country which appeared in such a posture of defence: The domestic Danes saw inevitable destruction to be the consequence of their tumults and insurrections: The neighbouring sovereigns, the king of Scotland, the princes of Wales, of the Isle of Man, of the Orkneys, and even of Ireland [c], were reduced to pay submission to so formidable a monarch. He carried his superiority to a great height, and might have excited an universal combination against him, had not his power been so well established as to deprive his enemies of all hopes of shaking it. It is said, that residing once at Chester, and having purposed to go by water to the abbey of St. John the Baptist, he obliged eight of his tributary princes to row him in a barge upon the Dee [d]. The English historians are fond of mentioning the name of Kenneth III, king of Scots, among the number: The Scottish historians either deny the fact, or assert that their

[b] Higden, p. 265. * See note [C] at the end of the volume.
[c] Spell. Conc. p. 432. [d] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 8. Hoveden, p. 406. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 356.

king

king, if ever he acknowledged himſelf a vaſſal to Edgar, did him homage, not for his crown, but for the dominions which he held in England. CHAP. II.

But the chief means by which Edgar maintained his authority, and preſerved public peace, was the paying of court to Dunſtan and the monks, who had at firſt placed him on the throne, and who, by their pretenſions to ſuperior ſanctity and purity of manners, had acquired an aſcendant over the people. He favoured their ſcheme for diſpoſſeſſing the ſecular canons of all the monaſteries [e]; he beſtowed preferment on none but their partizans; he allowed Dunſtan to reſign the ſee of Worceſter into the hands of Oſwald, one of his creatures [f]; and to place Ethelwold, another of them, in that of Wincheſter [g]; he conſulted theſe prelates in the adminiſtration of all eccleſiaſtical, and even in that of many civil affairs; and though the vigour of his own genius prevented him from being implicitly guided by them, the king and the biſhops found ſuch advantages in their mutual agreement, that they always acted in concert, and united their influence in preſerving the peace and tranquillity of the kingdom.

In order to complete the great work of placing the new order of monks in all the convents, Edgar ſummoned a general council of the prelates and the heads of the religious orders. He here inveighed againſt the diſſolute lives of the ſecular clergy; the ſmallneſs of their tonſure, which, it is probable, maintained no longer any reſemblance to the crown of thorns; their negligence in attending the exerciſe of their function; their mixing with the laity in the pleaſures of gaming, hunting, dancing, and ſinging; and their openly living with concubines, by which it is commonly ſuppoſed he meant their wives.

[e] Chron. Sax. p. 117, 118. W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 8. Hoveden, p. 425, 426. Oſberne, p. 112. [f] W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 8. Hoveden, p. 425. [g] Gervaſe, p. 1646. Brompton, p. 864. Flor. Wigorn. p. 606. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 27, 28.

He

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He then turned himſelf to Dunſtan the primate; and in the name of king Edred, whom he ſuppoſed to look down from heaven with indignation againſt all thoſe enormities, he thus addreſſed him: "It is "you, Dunſtan, by whoſe advice I founded mo-"naſteries, built churches, and expended my trea-"ſure, in the ſupport of religion and religious "houſes. You were my counſellor and aſſiſtant in "all my ſchemes: You were the director of my "conſcience: To you I was obedient in all things. "When did you call for ſupplies, which I refuſed "you? Was my aſſiſtance ever wanting to the "poor? Did I deny ſupport and eſtabliſhments to "the clergy and the convents? Did I not hearken "to your inſtructions, who told me that theſe cha-"rities were, of all others, the moſt grateful to my "Maker, and fixed a perpetual fund for the ſup-"port of religion? And are all our pious endea-"vours now fruſtrated by the diſſolute lives of the "prieſts? Not that I throw any blame on you; "You have reaſoned, beſought, inculcated, in-"veighed: But it now behoves you to uſe ſharper "and more vigorous remedies; and conjoining "your ſpiritual authority with the civil power, to "purge effectually the temple of God from thieves "and intruders [h]." It is eaſy to imagine, that this harangue had the deſired effect; and that, when the king and prelates thus concurred with the popular prejudices, it was not long before the monks prevailed, and eſtabliſhed their new diſcipline in almoſt all the convents.

We may remark, that the declamations againſt the ſecular clergy are, both here and in all the hiſtorians, conveyed in general terms; and as that order of men are commonly reſtrained by the decency of their character, it is difficult to believe that the complaints againſt their diſſolute manners could be

[h] Abbas Rieval. p. 360, 361. Spell. Conc. p. 476, 477, 478.

ſo

ſo univerſally juſt as is pretended. It is more probable that the monks paid court to the populace by an affected auſterity of life; and repreſenting the moſt innocent liberties, taken by the other clergy as great and unpardonable enormities, thereby prepared the way for the encreaſe of their own power and influence. Edgar, however, like a true politician, concurred with the prevailing party; and he even indulged them in pretenſions, which, though they might, when complied with, engage the monks to ſupport royal authority during his own reign, proved afterwards dangerous to his ſucceſſors, and gave diſturbance to the whole civil power. He ſeconded the policy of the court of Rome, in granting to ſome monaſteries an exemption from epiſcopal juriſdiction: He allowed the convents, even thoſe of royal foundation, to uſurp the election of their own abbot: And he admitted their forgeries of ancient charters, by which, from the pretended grant of former kings, they aſſumed many privileges and immunities [i].

THESE merits of Edgar have procured him the higheſt panegyrics from the monks; and he is tranſmitted to us, not only under the character of a conſummate ſtateſman and an active prince, praiſes to which he ſeems to have been juſtly entitled, but under that of a great ſaint and a man of virtue. But nothing could more betray both his hypocriſy in inveighing againſt the licentiouſneſs of the ſecular clergy, and the intereſted ſpirit of his partiſans, in beſtowing ſuch eulogies on his piety, than the uſual tenour of his conduct, which was licentious to the higheſt degree, and violated every law, human and divine. Yet thoſe very monks, who, as we are told by Ingulf, a very ancient hiſtorian, had no idea of any moral or religious merit, except chaſtity and obedience, not only connived at his enormities, but loaded him with the greateſt praiſes. Hiſtory, how-

[i] Chron. Sax. p. 118. W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 8. Seldeni Spicileg. ad Eadm. p. 149. 157.

ever,

CHAP. II. ever, has preserved some instances of his amours, from which, as from a specimen, we may form a conjecture of the rest.

Edgar broke into a convent, carried off Editha, a nun, by force, and even committed violenee on her person[k]. For this act of sacrilege he was reprimanded by Dunstan; and that he might reconcile himself to the church, he was obliged not to separate from his mistress, but to abstain from wearing his crown during seven years, and to deprive himself so long of that vain ornament[l]: A punishment very unequal to that which had been inflicted on the unfortunate Edwy, who, for a marriage which in the strictest sense could only deserve the name of irregular, was expelled his kingdom, saw his queen treated with singular barbarity, was loaded with calumnies, and has been represented to us under the most odious colours. Such is the ascendant which may be attained, by hypocrisy and cabal, over mankind!

There was another mistress of Edgar's, with whom he first formed a connection by a kind of accident. Passing one day by Andover, he lodged in the house of a nobleman, whose daughter, being endowed with all the graces of person and behaviour, enflamed him at first sight with the highest desire; and he resolved by any expedient to gratify it. As he had not leisure to employ courtship or address for attaining his purpose, he went directly to her mother, declared the violence of his passion, and desired that the young lady might be allowed to pass that very night with him. The mother was a woman of virtue, and determined not to dishonour her daughter and her family by compliance; but being well acquainted with the impetuosity of the king's temper, she thought it would be easier, as well as safer, to deceive than refuse him. She feigned therefore a submission to his will; but secretly

k W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 8. Osberne, p. 3. Diceto, p. 457. Higden, p. 265. 267, 268. Spell. Conc. p. 481. l Osberne, p. 111.

ordered

ordered a waiting-maid, of no disagreeable figure, to steal into the king's bed, after all the company should be retired to rest. In the morning, before day-break, the damsel, agreeably to the injunctions of her mistress, offered to retire; but Edgar, who had no reserve in his pleasures, and whose love to his bed-fellow was rather enflamed by enjoyment, refused his consent, and employed force and entreaties to detain her. Elfleda (for that was the name of the maid), trusting to her own charms, and to the love with which, she hoped, she had now inspired the king, made probably but a faint resistance; and the return of light discovered the deceit to Edgar. He had passed a night so much to his satisfaction, that he expressed no displeasure with the old lady on account of her fraud; his love was transferred to Elfleda; she became his favourite mistress; and maintained her ascendant over him till his marriage with Elfrida [m].

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THE circumstances of his marriage with this lady were more singular and more criminal. Elfrida was daughter and heir of Olgar, earl of Devonshire; and though she had been educated in the country, and had never appeared at court, she had filled all England with the reputation of her beauty. Edgar himself, who was indifferent to no accounts of this nature, found his curiosity excited by the frequent panegyrics which he heard of Elfrida; and reflecting on her noble birth, he resolved, if he found her charms answerable to their fame, to obtain possession of her on honourable terms. He communicated his intention to earl Athelwold his favourite; but used the precaution, before he made any advances to her parents, to order that nobleman, on some pretence, to pay them a visit, and to bring him a certain account of the beauty of their daughter. Athelwold, when introduced to the young lady, found general report

m W. Malmes. lib 2. cap. 8. Higden, p 268.

to

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to have fallen ſhort of the truth; and being actuated by the moſt vehement love, he determined to ſacrifice to this new paſſion his fidelity to his maſter, and to the truſt repoſed in him. He returned to Edgar, and told him, that the riches alone, and high quality of Elfrida, had been the ground of the admiration paid her, and that her charms, far from being anywiſe extraordinary, would have been overlooked in a woman of inferior ſtation. When he had, by this deceit, diverted the king from his purpoſe, he took an opportunity, after ſome interval, of turning again the converſation on Elfrida: He remarked, that though the parentage and fortune of the lady had not produced on him, as on others, any illuſion with regard to her beauty, he could not forbear reflecting that ſhe would, on the whole, be an advantageous match for him, and might, by her birth and riches, make him ſufficient compenſation for the homelineſs of her perſon. If the king, therefore, gave his approbation, he was determined to make propoſals in his own behalf to the earl of Devonſhire, and doubted not to obtain his, as well as the young lady's conſent to the marriage. Edgar, pleaſed with an expedient for eſtabliſhing his favourite's fortune, not only exhorted him to execute his purpoſe, but forwarded his ſucceſs by his recommendations to the parents of Elfrida; and Athelwold was ſoon made happy in the poſſeſſion of his miſtreſs. Dreading, however, the detection of the artifice, he employed every pretence for detaining Elfrida in the country, and for keeping her at a diſtance from Edgar.

The violent paſſion of Athelwold had rendered him blind to the neceſſary conſequences which muſt attend his conduct, and the advantages which the numerous enemies that always purſue a royal favourite, would, by its means, be able to make againſt him. Edgar was ſoon informed of the truth; but before he would execute vengeance on Athelwold's treachery, he reſolved to ſatisfy himſelf with his

own

own eyes of the certainty and full extent of his guilt. He told him, that he intended to pay him a visit in his castle, and be introduced to the acquaintance of his new-married wife; and Athelwold, as he could not refuse the honour, only craved leave to go before him a few hours, that he might the better prepare every thing for his reception. He then discovered the whole matter to Elfrida; and begged her, if she had any regard either to her own honour or his life, to conceal from Edgar, by every circumstance of dress and behaviour, that fatal beauty which had seduced him from fidelity to his friend, and had betrayed him into so many falsehoods. Elfrida promised compliance, though nothing was farther from her intentions. She deemed herself little beholden to Athelwold for a passion which had deprived her of a crown; and knowing the force of her own charms, she did not despair even yet of reaching that dignity, of which her husband's artifice had bereaved her. She appeared before the king with all the advantages which the richest attire and the most engaging airs could bestow upon her, and she excited at once in his bosom the highest love towards herself, and the most furious desire of revenge against her husband. He knew, however, to dissemble these passions; and seducing Athelwold into a wood, on pretence of hunting, he stabbed him with his own hand, and soon after publicly espoused Elfrida [n].

Before we conclude our account of this reign, we must mention two circumstances, which are remarked by historians. The reputation of Edgar allured a great number of foreigners to visit his court; and he gave them encouragement to settle in England [o]. We are told that they imported all the vices of their respective countries, and contri-

[n] W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 8. Hoveden, p. 426. Brompton, p. 865, 866. Flor. Wigorn. p. 606. Higden, p. 268. [o] Chron. Sax. p. 116. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 356. Brompton, p. 865.

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buted to corrupt the ſimple manners of the natives [p]. But as this ſimplicity of manners, ſo highly and often ſo injudiciouſly extolled, did not preſerve them from barbarity and treachery, the greateſt of all vices, and the moſt incident to a rude uncultivated people, we ought perhaps to deem their acquaintance with foreigners rather an advantage; as it tended to enlarge their views, and to cure them of thoſe illiberal prejudices and ruſtic manners to which iſlanders are often ſubject.

ANOTHER remarkable incident of this reign was the extirpation of wolves from England. This advantage was attained by the induſtrious policy of Edgar. He took great pains in hunting and purſuing thoſe ravenous animals; and when he found that all that eſcaped him had taken ſhelter in the mountains and foreſts of Wales, he changed the tribute of money impoſed on the Welſh princes by Athelſtan, his predeceſſor [q], into an annual tribute of three hundred heads of wolves; which produced ſuch diligence in hunting them, that the animal has been no more ſeen in this iſland.

EDGAR died after a reign of ſixteen years, and in the thirty-third of his age. He was ſucceeded by Edward, whom he had by his firſt marriage with the daughter of earl Ordmer.

EDWARD the Martyr.

975. THE ſucceſſion of this prince, who was only fifteen years of age at his father's death, did not take place without much difficulty and oppoſition. Elfrida, his ſtep-mother, had a ſon, Ethelred, ſeven years old, whom ſhe attempted to raiſe to the throne: She affirmed that Edgar's marriage with the mother of Edward was expoſed to inſuperable objections; and as ſhe had poſſeſſed great credit with her

[p] W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 8.

[q] W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 6. Brompton, p. 838.

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her husband, she had found means to acquire partisans, who seconded all her pretensions. But the title of Edward was supported by many advantages. He was appointed successor by the will of his father[r]: He was approaching to man's estate, and might soon be able to take into his own hands the reins of government: The principal nobility, dreading the imperious temper of Elfrida, were averse to her son's government, which must enlarge her authority, and probably put her in possession of the regency: Above all, Dunstan, whose character of sanctity had given him the highest credit with the people, had espoused the cause of Edward, over whom he had already acquired a great ascendant[s]; and he was determined to execute the will of Edgar in his favour. To cut off all opposite pretensions, Dunstan resolutely anointed and crowned the young prince at Kingston; and the whole kingdom, without farther dispute, submitted to him[t].

It was of great importance to Dunstan and the monks, to place on the throne a king favourable to their cause: The secular clergy had still partisans in England, who wished to support them in the possession of the convents, and of the ecclesiastical authority. On the first intelligence of Edgar's death, Alfere, duke of Mercia, expelled the new orders of monks from all the monasteries which lay within his jurisdiction[u]; but Elfwin, duke of East-Anglia, and Brithnot, duke of the East-Saxons, protected them within their territories, and insisted upon the execution of the late laws enacted in their favour. In order to settle this controversy, there were summoned several synods, which, according to the practice of those times, consisted partly of ecclesiastical members, partly of the lay nobility. The monks were

[r] Hoveden, p. 427. Eadmer, p. 3. [s] Eadmer, ex edit. Seldeni, p. 3. [t] W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 9. Hoveden. p. 427. Osberne, p. 113. [u] Chron. Sax. p. 123. W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 9. Hoveden, p. 427. Brompton, p. 870. Flor. Wigorn. p. 607.

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able to prevail in these assemblies; though, as it appears, contrary to the secret wishes, if not the declared inclination, of the leading men in the nation [w]: They had more invention in forging miracles to support their cause; or having been so fortunate as to obtain, by their pretended austerities, the character of piety, their miracles were more credited by the populace.

In one synod, Dunstan finding the majority of votes against him, rose up and informed the audience, that he had that instant received an immediate revelation in behalf of the monks: The assembly was so astonished at this intelligence, or probably so overawed by the populace, that they proceeded no farther in their deliberations. In another synod, a voice issued from the crucifix, and informed the members that the establishment of the monks was founded on the will of heaven, and could not be opposed without impiety [x]. But the miracle performed in the third synod was still more alarming: The floor of the hall in which the assembly met sunk of a sudden, and a great number of the members were either bruised or killed by the fall. It was remarked, that Dunstan had that day prevented the king from attending the synod, and that the beam, on which his own chair stood, was the only one that did not sink under the weight of the assembly [y]. But these circumstances, instead of begetting any suspicion of contrivance, were regarded as the surest proof of the immediate interposition of Providence, in behalf of those favourites of heaven.

Edward lived four years after his accession, and there passed nothing memorable during his reign.

[w] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 9. [x] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 9. Osberne, p. 112. Gervase, p. 1647. Brompton, p 870. Higden. p. 269. [y] Chron. Sax. p. 124. W. Malmes lib. 2. cap. 9. Hoveden, p. 427. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 357. Gervase, p. 1647. Brompton, p. 870. Flor. Wigorn. p. 607. Higden, p. 269. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 29.

His

His death alone was memorable and tragical[z]. This young prince was endowed with the moſt amiable innocence of manners; and as his own intentions were always pure, he was incapable of entertaining any ſuſpicion againſt others. Though his ſtep-mother had oppoſed his ſucceſſion, and had raiſed a party in favour of her own ſon, he always ſhowed her marks of regard, and even expreſſed, on all occaſions, the moſt tender affection towards his brother. He was hunting one day in Dorſetſhire; and being led by the chaſe near Corfe-caſtle, where Elfrida reſided, he took the opportunity of paying her a viſit, unattended by any of his retinue, and he thereby preſented her with the opportunity which ſhe had long wiſhed for. After he had mounted his horſe, he deſired ſome liquor to be brought him: While he was holding the cup to his head, a ſervant of Elfrida approached him, and gave him a ſtab behind. The prince, finding himſelf wounded, put ſpurs to his horſe; but becoming faint by loſs of blood, he fell from the ſaddle, his foot ſtuck in the ſtirrup, and he was dragged along by his unruly horſe till he expired. Being tracked by the blood, his body was found, and was privately interred at Wareham by his ſervants.

The youth and innocence of this prince, with his tragical death, begat ſuch compaſſion among the people, that they believed miracles to be wrought at his tomb; and they gave him the appellation of martyr, though his murder had no connexion with any religious principle or opinion. Elfrida built monaſteries, and performed many penances, in order to atone for her guilt; but could never, by all her hypocriſy or remorſes, recover the good opinion of the public, though ſo eaſily deluded in thoſe ignorant ages.

[z] Chron. Sax. p. 124.

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Ethelred——Settlement of the Normans——Edmund Ironside——Canute——Harold Harefoot——Hardicanute——Edward the Confessor——Harold.

ETHELRED.

CHAP. III. 978. THE freedom which England had ſo long enjoyed from the depredations of the Danes, ſeems to have proceeded, partly from the eſtabliſhments which that piratical nation had obtained in the north of France, and which employed all their ſuperfluous hands to people and maintain them; partly from the vigour and warlike ſpirit of a long race of Engliſh princes, who preſerved the kingdom in a poſture of defence by ſea and land, and either prevented or repelled every attempt of the invaders. But a new generation of men being now ſprung up in the northern regions, who could no longer diſburthen themſelves on Normandy; the Engliſh had reaſon to dread that the Danes would again viſit an iſland to which they were invited, both by the memory of their paſt ſucceſſes, and by the expectation of aſſiſtance from their countrymen, who, though long eſtabliſhed in the kingdom, were not yet thoroughly incorporated with the natives, nor had entirely forgotten their inveterate habits of war and depredation. And as the reigning prince was a minor, and even when he attained to man's eſtate, never diſcovered either courage or capacity ſufficient to govern his own ſubjects, much leſs to repel a formidable enemy, the people might juſtly apprehend the worſt calamities from ſo dangerous a criſis.

THE Danes, before they durſt attempt any important enterpriſe againſt England, made an inconſiderable

ſiderable deſcent by way of trial; and having landed from ſeven veſſels near Southampton, they ravaged the country, enriched themſelves by ſpoil, and departed with impunity. Six years after, they made a like attempt in the weſt, and met with like ſucceſs. The invaders, having now found affairs in a very different ſituation, from that in which they formerly appeared, encouraged their countrymen to aſſemble a greater force, and to hope for more conſiderable advantages. They landed in Eſſex, under the command of two leaders; and having defeated and ſlain at Maldon, Brithnot, duke of that county, who ventured, with a ſmall body, to attack them, they ſpread their devaſtations over all the neighbouring provinces. In this extremity, Ethelred, to whom hiſtorians give the epithet of the *Unready*, inſtead of rouſing his people to defend with courage their honour and their property, hearkened to the advice of Siricius, archbiſhop of Canterbury, which was ſeconded by many of the degenerate nobility; and paying the enemy the ſum of ten thouſand pounds, he bribed them to depart the kingdom. This ſhameful expedient was attended with the ſucceſs which might be expected. The Danes next year appeared off the eaſtern coaſt, in hopes of ſubduing a people who defended themſelves by their money, which invited aſſailants, inſtead of their arms, which repelled them. But the Engliſh, ſenſible of their folly, had, in the interval, aſſembled in a great council, and had determined to collect at London a fleet able to give battle to the enemy [a]; though that judicious meaſure failed of ſucceſs, from the treachery of Alfric duke of Mercia, whoſe name is infamous in the annals of that age, by the calamities which his repeated perfidy brought upon his country. This nobleman had, in 983, ſucceeded to his father, Alfere, in that extenſive command;

CHAP. III. 981. 991.

[a] Chron. Sax. p. 126.

 but

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but being deprived of it two years after, and banished the kingdom, he was obliged to employ all his intrigue, and all his power, which was too great for a subject, to be restored to his country, and reinstated in his authority. Having had experience of the credit and malevolence of his enemies, he thenceforth trusted for security, not to his services, or to the affections of his fellow-citizens, but to the influence which he had obtained over his vassals, and to the public calamities, which he thought must, in every revolution, render his assistance necessary. Having fixed this resolution, he determined to prevent all such successes as might establish the royal authority, or render his own situation dependant or precarious. As the English had formed the plan of surrounding and destroying the Danish fleet in harbour, he privately informed the enemy of their danger; and when they put to sea, in consequence of this intelligence, he deserted to them, with the squadron under his command, the night before the engagement, and thereby disappointed all the efforts of his countrymen [b]. Ethelred, enraged at his perfidy, seized his son Alfgar, and ordered his eyes to be put out [c]. But such was the power of Alfric, that he again forced himself into authority; and though he had given this specimen of his character, and received this grievous provocation, it was found necessary to entrust him anew with the government of Mercia. This conduct of the court, which in all its circumstances is so barbarous, weak, and imprudent, both merited and prognosticated the most grievous calamities.

993. THE northern invaders, now well acquainted with the defenceless condition of England, made a powerful descent under the command of Sweyn king of Denmark, and Olave king of Norway; and sailing up the Humber, spread on all sides their destructive

[b] Chron. Sax. p. 127. W. Malm. p. 62. Higden, p. 270.

[c] Chron. Sax. p. 128. W. Malm. p. 62.

ravages. Lindesey was laid waste; Banbury was destroyed; and all the Northumbrians, though mostly of Danish descent, were constrained either to join the invaders, or to suffer under their depredations. A powerful army was assembled to oppose the Danes, and a general action ensued; but the English were deserted in the battle, from the cowardice or treachery of their three leaders, all of them men of Danish race, Frena, Frithegist, and Godwin, who gave the example of a shameful flight to the troops under their command.

ENCOURAGED by this success, and still more by the contempt which it inspired for their enemy, the pirates ventured to attack the centre of the kingdom; and entering the Thames in ninety-four vessels, laid siege to London, and threatened it with total destruction. But the citizens, alarmed at the danger, and firmly united among themselves, made a bolder defence than the cowardice of the nobility and gentry gave the invaders reason to apprehend; and the besiegers, after suffering the greatest hardships, were finally frustrated in their attempt. In order to revenge themselves, they laid waste Essex, Sussex, and Hampshire; and having there procured horses, they were thereby enabled to spread, through the more inland counties, the fury of their depredations. In this extremity, Ethelred and his nobles had recourse to the former expedient; and sending ambassadors to the two northern kings, they promised them subsistence and tribute, on condition they would, for the present, put an end to their ravages, and soon after depart the kingdom. Sweyn and Olave agreed to the terms, and peaceably took up their quarters at Southampton, where the sum of sixteen thousand pounds was paid to them. Olave even made a journey to Andover, where Ethelred resided; and he received the rite of confirmation from the English bishops, as well as many rich presents from the king. He here promised that he would

CHAP. III. never more infest the English territories; and he faithfully fulfilled the engagement. This prince receives the appellation of St. Olave from the church of Rome; and, notwithstanding the general presumption which lies either against the understanding or morals of every one who in those ignorant ages was dignified with that title, he seems to have been a man of merit and of virtue. Sweyn, though less scrupulous than Olave, was constrained, upon the departure of the Norwegian prince, to evacuate also the kingdom with all his followers.

997. THIS composition brought only a short interval to the miseries of the English. The Danish pirates appeared soon after in the Severne; and having committed spoil in Wales, as well as in Cornwal and Devonshire, they sailed round to the south coast, and entering the Tamar, completed the devastation of these two counties. They then returned to the Bristol channel; and penetrating into the country by the Avon, spread themselves over all that neighbourhood, and carried fire and sword even into Dor-
998. setshire. They next changed the seat of war; and after ravaging the Isle of Wight, they entered the Thames and Medway, and laid siege to Rochester, where they defeated the Kentish-men in a pitched battle. After this victory, the whole province of Kent was made a scene of slaughter, fire, and devastation. The extremity of these miseries forced the English into counsels for common defence both by sea and land; but the weakness of the king, the divisions among the nobility, the treachery of some, the cowardice of others, the want of concert in all, frustrated every endeavour: Their fleets and armies either came too late to attack the enemy, or were repulsed with dishonour; and the people were thus equally ruined by resistance or by submission. The English therefore destitute both of prudence and unanimity in council, of courage and conduct in the field, had recourse to the same weak expedient

which by experience they had already found so ineffectual: They offered the Danes to buy peace, by paying them a large sum of money. These ravagers rose continually in their demands; and now required the payment of 24,000 pounds, to which the English were so mean and imprudent as to submit[a]. The departure of the Danes procured them another short interval of repose, which they enjoyed, as if it were to be perpetual, without making any effectual preparations for a more vigorous resistance upon the next return of the enemy.

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BESIDES receiving this sum, the Danes were engaged by another motive to depart a kingdom which appeared so little in a situation to resist their efforts: They were invited over by their countrymen in Normandy, who at this time were hard pressed by the arms of Robert king of France, and who found it difficult to defend the settlement which, with so much advantage to themselves and glory to their nation, they had made in that country. It is probable also, that Ethelred, observing the close connexions thus maintained among all the Danes, however divided in government or situation, was desirous of forming an alliance with that formidable people: For this purpose, being now a widower, he made his addresses to Emma, sister to Richard II. duke of Normandy, and he soon succeeded in his negociation. The princess came over this year to England, 1001.
and was married to Ethelred[b].

Settlement of the Normans.

IN the end of the ninth, and beginning of the tenth century, when the north, not yet exhausted by that multitude of people, or rather nations, which she had successively emitted, sent forth a new race, not of conquerors, as before, but of pirates and ravagers, who infested the countries possessed by her once warlike sons; lived Rollo, a petty prince or chieftain of Denmark, whose valour and abilities

[a] Hoveden, p 429. Chron. Mailr. p. 153. [b] H. Hunt. p 359. Higden, p. 271.

soon

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ſoon engaged the attention of his countrymen. He was expoſed in his youth to the jealouſy of the king of Denmark, who attacked his ſmall but independent principality; and who, being foiled in every aſſault, had recourſe at laſt to perfidy for effecting his purpoſe, which he had often attempted in vain by force of arms[c]: He lulled Rollo into ſecurity by an inſidious peace; and falling ſuddenly upon him, murdered his brother and his braveſt officers, and forced him to fly for ſafety into Scandinavia. Here many of his ancient ſubjects, induced partly by affection to their prince, partly by the oppreſſions of the Daniſh monarch, ranged themſelves under his ſtandard, and offered to follow him in every enterpriſe. Rollo, inſtead of attempting to recover his paternal dominions, where he muſt expect a vigorous reſiſtance from the Danes, determined to purſue an eaſier, but more important undertaking, and to make his fortune, in imitation of his countrymen, by pillaging the richer and more ſouthern coaſts of Europe. He collected a body of troops, which, like that of all thoſe ravagers, was compoſed of Norwegians, Swedes, Friſians, Danes, and adventurers of all nations, who, being accuſtomed to a roving unſettled life, took delight in nothing but war and plunder. His reputation brought him aſſociates from all quarters; and a viſion, which he pretended to have appeared to him in his ſleep, and which, according to his interpretation of it, prognoſticated the greateſt ſucceſſes, proved alſo a powerful incentive with thoſe ignorant and ſuperſtitious people[d].

The firſt attempt made by Rollo was on England, near the end of Alfred's reign; when that great monarch, having ſettled Guthrum and his followers in Eaſt-Anglia, and others of thoſe freebooters in Northumberland, and having reſtored peace to his

c Dudo, ex edit. Ducheſne, p. 70, 71. Gul. Gemeticenis, lib. 2. cap. 2, 3. d Dudo, p. 71. Gul. Gem. in epiſt. ad Gul. Conq.

haraſſed

haraſſed country, had eſtabliſhed the moſt excellent military as well as civil inſtitutions among the Engliſh. The prudent Dane, finding that no advantages could be gained over ſuch a people, governed by ſuch a prince, ſoon turned his enterpriſes againſt France, which he found more expoſed to his inroads [e]; and during the reigns of Eudes, an uſurper, and of Charles the Simple, a weak prince, he committed the moſt deſtructive ravages both on the inland and maritime provinces of that kingdom. The French, having no means of defence againſt a leader, who united all the valour of his countrymen with the policy of more civilized nations, were obliged to ſubmit to the expedient practiſed by Alfred, and to offer the invaders a ſettlement in ſome of thoſe provinces which they had depopulated by their arms [f].

THE reaſon why the Danes for many years purſued meaſures ſo different from thoſe which had been embraced by the Goths, Vandals, Franks, Burgundians, Lombards, and other northern conquerors, was the great difference in the method of attack which was practiſed by theſe ſeveral nations, and to which the nature of their reſpective ſituations neceſſarily confined them. The latter tribes, living in an inland country, made incurſions by land upon the Roman empire; and when they entered far into the frontiers, they were obliged to carry along with them their wives and families, whom they had no hopes of ſoon reviſiting, and who could not otherwiſe participate of their plunder. This circumſtance quickly made them think of forcing a ſettlement in the provinces which they had overrun; and theſe barbarians, ſpreading themſelves over the country, found an intereſt in protecting the property and induſtry of the people whom they had ſubdued. But the Danes and Norwegians, invited by their

[e] Gul. Gemet. lib. 2. cap. 6. [f] Dudo, p. 82.

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maritime situation, and obliged to maintain themselves in their uncultivated country by fishing, had acquired some experience of navigation; and in their military excursions pursued the method practised against the Roman empire by the more early Saxons: They made descents in small bodies from their ships, or rather boats, and ravaging the coasts, returned with the booty to their families, whom they could not conveniently carry along with them in those hazardous enterprises. But when they increased their armaments, made incursions into the inland countries, and found it safe to remain longer in the midst of the enfeebled enemy, they had been accustomed to crowd their vessels with their wives and children; and having no longer any temptation to return to their own country, they willingly embraced an opportunity of settling in the warm climates and cultivated fields of the south.

Affairs were in this situation with Rollo and his followers, when Charles proposed to relinquish to them part of the province formerly called Neustria, and to purchase peace on these hard conditions. After all the terms were fully settled, there appeared only one circumstance shocking to the haughty Dane: He was required to do homage to Charles for this province, and to put himself in that humiliating posture imposed on vassals by the rites of the feudal law. He long refused to submit to this indignity; but being unwilling to lose such important advantages for a mere ceremony, he made a sacrifice of his pride to his interest, and acknowledged himself, in form, the vassal of the French monarch [g]. Charles gave him his daughter Gisla in marriage; and, that he might bind him faster to his interests, made him a donation of a considerable territory, besides that which he was obliged to surrender to him by his stipulations. When some of the French nobles in-

[g] Ypod. Neust. p. 417.

formed

formed him, that in return for so generous a present, it was expected that he should throw himself at the king's feet, and make suitable acknowledgments for his bounty: Rollo replied, that he would rather decline the present; and it was with some difficulty they could persuade him to make that compliment by one of his captains. The Dane, commissioned for this purpose, full of indignation at the order, and despising so unwarlike a prince, caught Charles by the foot, and pretending to carry it to his mouth, that he might kiss it, overthrew him before all his courtiers. The French, sensible of their present weakness, found it prudent to overlook this insult [h].

ROLLO, who was now in the decline of life, and was tired of wars and depredations, applied himself, with mature counsels, to the settlement of his new-acquired territory, which was thenceforth called Normandy; and he parcelled it out among his captains and followers. He followed, in this partition, the customs of the feudal law, which was then universally established in the southern countries of Europe, and which suited the peculiar circumstances of that age. He treated the French subjects, who submitted to him, with mildness and justice; he reclaimed his ancient followers from their ferocious violence; he established law and order throughout his state; and after a life spent in tumults and ravages, he died peaceably in a good old age, and left his dominions to his posterity [i].

WILLIAM I. who succeeded him, governed the dutchy twenty-five years; and, during that time, the Normans were thoroughly intermingled with the French, had acquired their language, had imitated their manners, and had made such progress towards cultivation, that, on the death of William, his son Richard, though a minor [k], inherited his dominions: A sure proof that the Normans were al-

[h] Gul. Gemet. lib. 2. cap. 17. [i] Gul. Gemet. lib. 2. cap. 19, 20, 21. [k] Order. Vitalis, p. 459. Gul. Gemet. lib. 4. cap. 1.

CHAP. III.

ready ſomewhat advanced in civility, and that their government could now reſt ſecure on its laws and civil inſtitutions, and was not wholly ſuſtained by the abilities of the ſovereign. Richard, after a long reign of fifty-four years, was ſucceeded by his ſon of the ſame name, in the year 996[l]; which was eighty-five years after the firſt eſtabliſhment of the Normans in France. This was the duke who gave his ſiſter Emma in marriage to Ethelred king of England, and who thereby formed connections with a country which his poſterity was ſo ſoon after deſtined to ſubdue.

The Danes had been eſtabliſhed during a longer period in England than in France; and though the ſimilarity of their original language to that of the Saxons, invited them to a more early coalition with the natives, they had hitherto found ſo little example of civilized manners among the Engliſh, that they retained all their ancient ferocity, and valued themſelves only on their national character of military bravery. The recent as well as more ancient atchievements of their countrymen tended to ſupport this idea; and the Engliſh princes, particularly Athelſtan and Edgar, ſenſible of that ſuperiority, had been accuſtomed to keep in pay bodies of Daniſh troops, who were quartered about the country, and committed many violences upon the inhabitants. Theſe mercenaries had attained to ſuch a height of luxury, according to the old Engliſh writers[m], that they combed their hair once a day, bathed themſelves once a week, changed their clothes frequently; and by all theſe arts of effeminacy, as well as by their military character, had rendered themſelves ſo agreeable to the fair ſex, that they debauched the wives and daughters of the Engliſh, and diſhonoured many families. But what moſt provoked the inhabitants was, that inſtead of defending them againſt

[l] Order. Vitalis, p. 459. [m] Wallingford p. 547.

invaders,

invaders, they were ever ready to betray them to the foreign Danes, and to associate themselves with all straggling parties of that nation. The animosity between the inhabitants of English and Danish race had, from these repeated injuries, risen to a great height; when Ethelred, from a policy incident to weak princes, embraced the cruel resolution of massacring the latter, throughout all his dominions *. Secret orders were dispatched to commence the execution every where on the same day; and the festival of St. Brice, which fell on a Sunday, the day on which the Danes usually bathed themselves, was chosen for that purpose. It is needless to repeat the accounts transmitted concerning the barbarity of this massacre: The rage of the populace, excited by so many injuries, sanctified by authority, and stimulated by example, distinguished not between innocence and guilt, spared neither sex nor age, and was not satiated without the tortures as well as death of the unhappy victims. Even Gunilda, sister to the king of Denmark, who had married earl Paling, and had embraced Christianity, was, by the advice of Edric, earl of Wilts, seized and condemned to death by Ethelred, after seeing her husband and children butchered before her face. This unhappy princess foretold, in the agonies of despair, that her murder would soon be avenged by the total ruin of the English nation.

CHAP. III.

1002.

Nov. 13.

NEVER was prophecy better fulfilled; and never did barbarous policy prove more fatal to the authors. Sweyn and his Danes, who wanted but a pretence for invading the English, appeared off the western coast, and threatened to take full revenge for the slaughter of their countrymen. Exeter fell first into their hands, from the negligence or treachery of earl Hugh, a Norman, who had been made governor by the interest of queen Emma. They began to spread

1003.

* See note [D] at the end of the volume.

their

CHAP. III. their devaſtations over the country; when the Engliſh, ſenſible what outrages they muſt now expect from their barbarous and offended enemy, aſſembled more early, and in greater numbers than uſual, and made an appearance of vigorous reſiſtance. But all theſe preparations were fruſtrated by the treachery of duke Alfric, who was intruſted with the command, and who, feigning ſickneſs, refuſed to lead the army againſt the Danes, till it was diſpirited, and at laſt diſſipated, by his fatal miſconduct. Alfric ſoon after died; and Edric, a greater traitor than he, who had married the king's daughter, and had acquired a total aſcendant over him, ſucceeded Alfric, in the government of Mercia, and in the command of the Engliſh armies. A great famine, proceeding partly from the bad ſeaſons, partly from the decay of agriculture, added to all the other miſeries of the inhabitants. The country, waſted by the Danes, haraſſed by the fruitleſs expeditions of its own forces, was reduced to the utmoſt
1007. deſolation; and at laſt ſubmitted to the infamy of purchaſing a precarious peace from the enemy, by the payment of 30,000 pounds.

THE Engliſh endeavoured to employ this interval in making preparations againſt the return of the Danes, which they had reaſon ſoon to expect. A law was made, ordering the proprietors of eight hides of land to provide each a horſeman and a complete ſuit of armour; and thoſe of 310 hides to equip a ſhip for the defence of the coaſt. When this navy was aſſembled, which muſt have conſiſted of near eight hundred veſſels [n], all hopes of its ſucceſs were diſappointed by the factions, animoſities, and diſſenſions of the nobility. Edric had impelled his brother Brightric to prefer an accuſation of treaſon againſt Wolfnorth, governor of Suſſex, the father of the famous earl Godwin; and that nobleman,

[n] There were 243,600 hides in England. Conſequently the ſhips equipped muſt be 785. The cavalry was 30,450 men.

well

well acquainted with the malevolence as well as power of his enemy, found no means of ſafety but in deſerting with twenty ſhips to the Danes. Brightric purſued him with a fleet of eighty ſail; but his ſhips being ſhattered in a tempeſt, and ſtranded on the coaſt, he was ſuddenly attacked by Wolfnorth, and all his veſſels were burnt and deſtroyed. The imbecility of the king was little capable of repairing this miſfortune: The treachery of Edric fruſtrated every plan for future defence; and the Engliſh navy, diſconcerted, diſcouraged, and divided, was at laſt ſcattered into its ſeveral harbours.

It is almoſt impoſſible, or would be tedious, to relate particularly all the miſeries to which the Engliſh were thenceforth expoſed. We hear of nothing but the ſacking and burning of towns; the devaſtation of the open country; the appearance of the enemy in every quarter of the kingdom; their cruel diligence in diſcovering any corner which had not been ranſacked by their former violence. The broken and disjointed narration of the ancient hiſtorians is here well adapted to the nature of the war, which was conducted by ſuch ſudden inroads as would have been dangerous even to an united and well-governed kingdom, but proved fatal, where nothing but a general conſternation and mutual diffidence and diſſenſion prevailed. The governors of one province refuſed to march to the aſſiſtance of another, and were at laſt terrified from aſſembling their forces for the defence of their own province. General councils were ſummoned; but either no reſolution was taken, or none was carried into execution. And the only expedient in which the Engliſh agreed, was the baſe and imprudent one of buying a new peace from the Danes, by the payment of 48,000 pounds.

This meaſure did not even bring them that ſhort interval of repoſe which they had expected from it. 1011. The Danes, diſregarding all engagements, continued their devaſtations and hoſtilities; levied a new

contri-

CHAP. III. contribution of 8000 pounds upon the county of Kent alone; murdered the archbiſhop of Canterbury, who had refuſed to countenance this exaction; and the Engliſh nobility found no other reſource than that of ſubmitting every where to the Daniſh monarch, ſwearing allegiance to him, and deliver-
1013. ing him hoſtages for their fidelity. Ethelred, equally afraid of the violence of the enemy and the treachery of his own ſubjects, fled into Normandy, whither he had ſent before him queen Emma, and her two ſons Alfred and Edward. Richard received his unhappy gueſts with a generoſity that does honour to his memory.

1014. The king had not been above ſix weeks in Normandy, when he heard of the death of Sweyn, who expired at Gainſborough, before he had time to eſtabliſh himſelf in his new-acquired dominions. The Engliſh prelates and nobility, taking advantage of this event, ſent over a deputation to Normandy; invited Ethelred to return to them, expreſſing a deſire of being again governed by their native prince, and intimating their hopes that, being now tutored by experience, he would avoid all thoſe errors which had been attended with ſuch misfortunes to himſelf and to his people. But the miſconduct of Ethelred was incurable; and on his reſuming the government, he diſcovered the ſame incapacity, indolence, cowardice, and credulity, which had ſo often expoſed him to the inſults of his enemies. His ſon-in-law, Edric, notwithſtanding his repeated treaſons, retained ſuch influence at court, as to inſtil into the king jealouſies of Sigefert and Morcar, two of the chief nobles of Mercia: Edric allured them into his houſe, where he murdered them; while Ethelred participated in the infamy of the action, by confiſcating their eſtates, and thruſting into a convent the widow of Sigefert. She was a woman of ſingular beauty and merit; and in a viſit which was paid her, during her confinement, by prince Edmond, the

the king's eldeſt ſon, ſhe inſpired him with ſo violent an affection, that he releaſed her from the convent, and ſoon after married her without the conſent of his father. CHAP. III.

Meanwhile the Engliſh found in Canute, the ſon and ſucceſſor of Sweyn, an enemy no leſs terrible than the prince from whom death had ſo lately delivered them. He ravaged the eaſtern coaſt with mercileſs fury, and put aſhore all the Engliſh hoſtages at Sandwich, after having cut off their hands and noſes. He was obliged, by the neceſſity of his affairs, to make a voyage to Denmark; but returning ſoon after, he continued his depredations along the ſouthern coaſt: He even broke into the counties of Dorſet, Wilts, and Somerſet; where an army was aſſembled againſt him, under the command of prince Edmond and duke Edric. The latter ſtill continued his perfidious machinations; and after endeavouring in vain to get the prince into his power, he found means to diſperſe the army; and he then 1015. openly deſerted to Canute with forty veſſels.

Notwithstanding this misfortune, Edmond was not diſconcerted; but aſſembling all the force of England, was in a condition to give battle to the enemy. The king had had ſuch frequent experience of perfidy among his ſubjects, that he had loſt all confidence in them: He remained at London, pretending ſickneſs, but really from apprehenſions that they intended to buy their peace, by delivering him into the hands of his enemies. The army called aloud for their ſovereign to march at their head againſt the Danes; and on his refuſal to take the field, they were ſo diſcouraged, that thoſe vaſt preparations became ineffectual for the defence of the kingdom. Edmond, deprived of all regular ſupplies to maintain his ſoldiers, was obliged to commit equal ravages with thoſe which were practiſed by the Danes; and after making ſome fruitleſs expeditions into the north, which had ſubmitted entirely to Canute's

 power,

CHAP. III. 1016. power, he retired to London, determined there to maintain, to the last extremity, the small remains of English liberty. He here found every thing in confusion by the death of the king, who expired after an unhappy and inglorious reign of thirty-five years. He left two sons by his first marriage, Edmond, who succeeded him, and Edwy, whom Canute afterwards murdered. His two sons by the second marriage, Alfred and Edward, were immediately, upon Ethelred's death, conveyed into Normandy by queen Emma.

EDMOND IRONSIDE.

THIS prince, who received the name of Ironside from his hardy valour, possessed courage and abilities sufficient to have prevented his country from sinking into those calamities, but not to raise it from that abyss of misery into which it had already fallen. Among the other misfortunes of the English, treachery and disaffection had creeped in among the nobility and prelates; and Edmond found no better expedient for stopping the farther progress of these fatal evils, than to lead his army instantly into the field, and to employ them against the common enemy. After meeting with some success at Gillingham, he prepared himself to decide, in one general engagement, the fate of his crown; and at Scoerston, in the county of Glocester, he offered battle to the enemy, who were commanded by Canute and Edric. Fortune, in the beginning of the day, declared for him; but Edric, having cut off the head of one Osmer, whose countenance resembled that of Edmond, fixed it on a spear, carried it through the ranks in triumph, and called aloud to the English, that it was time to fly; for, behold! the head of their sovereign. And though Edmond, observing the consternation of the troops, took off his helmet and showed himself to them,

them, the utmoſt he could gain by his activity and valour was to leave the victory undecided. Edric now took a ſurer method to ruin him; by pretending to deſert to him; and as Edmond was well acquainted with his power, and probably knew no other of the chief nobility in whom he could repoſe more confidence, he was obliged, notwithſtanding the repeated perfidy of the man, to give him a conſiderable command in the army. A battle ſoon after enſued at Aſſington in Eſſex; where Edric, flying in the beginning of the day, occaſioned the total defeat of the Engliſh, followed by a great ſlaughter of the nobility. The indefatigable Edmond, however, had ſtill reſources: Aſſembling a new army at Gloceſter, he was again in a condition to diſpute the field; when the Daniſh and Engliſh nobility, equally haraſſed with thoſe convulſions, obliged their kings to come to a compromiſe, and to divide the kingdom between them by treaty. Canute reſerved to himſelf the northern diviſion, conſiſting of Mercia, Eaſt-Anglia, and Northumberland, which he had entirely ſubdued: The ſouthern parts were left to Edmond. This prince ſurvived the treaty about a month: He was murdered at Oxford by two of his chamberlains, accomplices of Edric, who thereby made way for the ſucceſſion of Canute the Dane to the crown of England.

CHAP. III.

CANUTE.

THE Engliſh, who had been unable to defend their country, and maintain their independency, under ſo active and brave a prince as Edmond, could, after his death, expect nothing but total ſubjection from Canute, who, active and brave himſelf, and at the head of a great force, was ready to take advantage of the minority of Edwin and Edward, the two ſons of Edmond. Yet this conqueror, who was commonly ſo little ſcrupulous, ſhowed 1017.

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showed himself anxious to cover his injustice under plausible pretences: Before he seized the dominions of the English princes, he summoned a general assembly of the states, in order to fix the succession of the kingdom. He here suborned some nobles to depose that, in the treaty of Glocester, it had been verbally agreed either to name Canute, in case of Edmond's death, successor to his dominions, or tutor to his children (for historians vary in this particular): And that evidence, supported by the great power of Canute, determined the states immediately to put the Danish monarch in possession of the government. Canute, jealous of the two princes, but sensible that he should render himself extremely odious if he ordered them to be dispatched in England, sent them abroad to his ally the king of Sweden, whom he desired, as soon as they arrived at his court, to free him by their death from all farther anxiety. The Swedish monarch was too generous to comply with the request; but being afraid of drawing on himself a quarrel with Canute, by protecting the young princes, he sent them to Solomon king of Hungary, to be educated in his court. The elder Edwin was afterwards married to the sister of the king of Hungary; but the English prince dying without issue, Solomon gave his sister-in-law, Agatha, daughter of the Emperor Henry II, in marriage to Edward the younger brother; and she bore him Edgar Atheling, Margaret, afterwards queen of Scotland, and Christina, who retired into a convent.

CANUTE, though he had reached the great point of his ambition, in obtaining possession of the English crown, was obliged at first to make great sacrifices to it; and to gratify the chief of the nobility, by bestowing on them the most extensive governments and jurisdictions. He created Thurkill earl or duke of East-Anglia (for these titles were then nearly of the same import), Yric of Northumberland,

land, and Edric of Mercia; reserving only to himself the adminiſtration of Weſſex. But ſeizing afterwards a favourable opportunity, he expelled Thurkill and Yric from their governments, and baniſhed them the kingdom: He put to death many of the Engliſh nobility, on whoſe fidelity he could not rely, and whom he hated on account of their diſloyalty to their native prince. And even the traitor Edric, having had the aſſurance to reproach him with his ſervices, was condemned to be executed, and his body to be thrown into the Thames; a ſuitable reward for his multiplied acts of perfidy and rebellion.

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CANUTE alſo found himſelf obliged, in the beginning of his reign, to load the people with heavy taxes, in order to reward his Daniſh followers: He exacted from them at one time the ſum of 72,000 pounds; beſides 11,000 pounds which he levied on London alone. He was probably willing, from political motives, to mulct ſeverely that city, on account of the affection which it had borne to Edmond, and the reſiſtance which it had made to the Daniſh power in two obſtinate ſieges[o]. But theſe rigours were imputed to neceſſity; and Canute, like a wiſe prince, was determined that the Engliſh, now deprived of all their dangerous leaders, ſhould be reconciled to the Daniſh yoke, by the juſtice and impartiality of his adminiſtration. He ſent back to Denmark as many of his followers as he could ſafely ſpare: He reſtored the Saxon cuſtoms in a general aſſembly of the ſtates: He made no diſtinction between Danes and Engliſh in the diſtribution of juſtice: And he took care, by a ſtrict execution of law, to protect the lives and properties of all his people. The Danes were gradually incorporated with his new ſubjects; and both were glad to ob-

[o] W. Malm. p. 72. In one of theſe ſieges, Canute diverted the courſe of the Thames, and by that means brought his ſhips above London bridge.

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tain a little respite from those multiplied calamities from which the one, no less than the other, had, in their fierce contest for power, experienced such fatal consequences.

THE removal of Edmond's children into so distant a country as Hungary, was, next to their death, regarded by Canute as the greatest security to his government: He had no farther anxiety, except with regard to Alfred and Edward, who were protected and supported by their uncle, Richard duke of Normandy. Richard even fitted out a great armament, in order to restore the English princes to the throne of their ancestors; and though the navy was dispersed by a storm, Canute saw the danger to which he was exposed from the enmity of so warlike a people as the Normans. In order to acquire the friendship of the duke, he paid his addresses to queen Emma, sister of that prince; and promised that he would leave the children, whom he should have by that marriage, in possession of the crown of England. Richard complied with his demand, and sent over Emma to England, where she was soon after married to Canute [p]. The English, though they disapproved of her espousing the mortal enemy of her former husband and his family, were pleased to find at court a sovereign, to whom they were accustomed, and who had already formed connections with them: And thus Canute, besides securing by this marriage the alliance of Normandy, gradually acquired, by the same means, the confidence of his own subjects [q]. The Norman prince did not long survive the marriage of Emma; and he left the inheritance of the dutchy to his eldest son of the same name; who dying a year after him without children, was succeeded by his brother Robert, a man of valour and abilities.

[p] Chron. Sax. p. 151. W. Malmes. p. 73. [q] W. Malmes. p. 73. Higden, p. 275.

CANUTE,

Canute, having ſettled his power in England beyond all danger of a revolution, made a voyage to Denmark, in order to reſiſt the attacks of the king of Sweden; and he carried along with him a great body of the Engliſh, under the command of earl Godwin. This nobleman had here an opportunity of performing a ſervice, by which he both reconciled the king's mind to the Engliſh nation, and, gaining to himſelf the friendſhip of his ſovereign, laid the foundation of that immenſe fortune which he acquired to his family. He was ſtationed next the Swediſh camp; and obſerving a favourable opportunity, which he was obliged ſuddenly to ſeize, he attacked the enemy in the night, drove them from their trenches, threw them into diſorder, purſued his advantage, and obtained a deciſive victory over them. Next morning Canute, ſeeing the Engliſh camp entirely abandoned, imagined that thoſe diſaffected troops had deſerted to the enemy: He was agreeably ſurpriſed to find that they were at that time engaged in purſuit of the diſcomfited Swedes. He was ſo pleaſed with his ſucceſs, and with the manner of obtaining it, that he beſtowed his daughter in marriage upon Godwin, and treated him ever after with entire confidence and regard.

In another voyage, which he made afterwards to Denmark, Canute attacked Norway, and expelling the juſt but unwarlike Olaus, kept poſſeſſion of his kingdom till the death of that prince. He had now, by his conqueſts and valour, attained the utmoſt height of grandeur: Having leiſure from wars and intrigues, he felt the unſatisfactory nature of all human enjoyments; and, equally weary of the glories and turmoils of this life, he began to caſt his view towards that future exiſtence, which it is ſo natural for the human mind, whether ſatiated by proſperity, or diſguſted with adverſity, to make the object of its attention. Unfortunately the ſpirit which prevailed in that age gave a wrong direction to his devotion; 1028.

CHAP. III. votion: Instead of making compensation to those whom he had injured by his former acts of violence, he employed himself entirely in those exercises of piety which the monks represented as the most meritorious. He built churches, he endowed monasteries, he enriched the ecclesiastics, and he bestowed revenues for the support of chantries at Assington and other places; where he appointed prayers to be said for the souls of those who had there fallen in battle against him. He even undertook a pilgrimage to Rome, where he resided a considerable time: Besides obtaining from the pope some privileges for the English school erected there, he engaged all the princes, through whose dominions he was obliged to pass, to desist from those heavy impositions and tolls which they were accustomed to exact from the English pilgrims. By this spirit of devotion, no less than by his equitable and politic administration, he gained, in a good measure, the affections of his subjects.

Canute, the greatest and most powerful monarch of his time, sovereign of Denmark and Norway, as well as of England, could not fail of meeting with adulation from his courtiers; a tribute which is liberally paid even to the meanest and weakest princes. Some of his flatterers breaking out one day in admiration of his grandeur, exclaimed that every thing was possible for him: Upon which the monarch, it is said, ordered his chair to be set on the sea-shore, while the tide was rising; and as the waters approached, he commanded them to retire, and to obey the voice of him who was lord of the ocean. He feigned to sit some time in expectation of their submission; but when the sea still advanced towards him, and began to wash him with its billows, he turned to his courtiers, and remarked to them, that every creature in the universe was feeble and impotent, and that power resided with one Being alone, in whose hands were all the elements

 of

of nature; who could say to the ocean, *Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther*; and who could level with his nod the most towering piles of human pride and ambition. CHAP. III.

The only memorable action which Canute performed after his return from Rome, was an expedition against Malcolm, king of Scotland. During the reign of Ethelred, a tax of a shilling a hide had been imposed on all the lands of England. It was commonly called *Danegelt*; because the revenue had been employed, either in buying peace with the Danes, or in making preparations against the inroads of that hostile nation. That monarch had required that the same tax should be paid by Cumberland which was held by the Scots; but Malcolm, a warlike prince, told him, that as he was always able to repulse the Danes by his own power, he would neither submit to buy peace of his enemies, nor pay others for resisting them. Ethelred, offended at this reply, which contained a secret reproach on his own conduct, undertook an expedition against Cumberland; but though he committed ravages upon the country, he could never bring Malcolm to a temper more humble or submissive. Canute, after his accession, summoned the Scottish king to acknowledge himself a vassal for Cumberland to the crown of England; but Malcolm refused compliance, on pretence that he owed homage to those princes only who inherited that kingdom by right of blood. Canute was not of a temper to bear this insult; and the king of Scotland soon found that the sceptre was in very different hands from those of the feeble and irresolute Ethelred. Upon Canute's appearing on the frontiers with a formidable army, Malcolm agreed that his grandson and heir, Duncan, whom he put in possession of Cumberland, should make the submissions required, and that the heirs of Scotland should al- 1031.

ways

CHAP. III. ways acknowledge themſelves vaſſals to England for that province [r].

Canute paſſed four years in peace after this enterpriſe, and he died at Shaftſbury [s]; leaving three ſons, Sweyn, Harold, and Hardicanute. Sweyn, whom he had by his firſt marriage with Alfwen, daughter of the earl of Hampſhire, was crowned in Norway: Hardicanute, whom Emma had born him, was in poſſeſſion of Denmark: Harold, who was of the ſame marriage with Sweyn, was at that time in England.

HAROLD HAREFOOT.

1035. THOUGH Canute, in his treaty with Richard, duke of Normandy, had ſtipulated that his children by Emma ſhould ſucceed to the crown of England, he had either conſidered himſelf as releaſed from that engagement by the death of Richard, or eſteemed it dangerous to leave an unſettled and newly conquered kingdom in the hands of ſo young a prince as Hardicanute: He therefore appointed, by his will, Harold ſucceſſor to the crown. This prince was beſides preſent to maintain his claim; he was favoured by all the Danes; and he got immediately poſſeſſion of his father's treaſures, which might be equally uſeful, whether he found it neceſſary to proceed by force or intrigue in inſuring his ſucceſſion. On the other hand, Hardicanute had the ſuffrages of the Engliſh, who, on account of his being born among them of queen Emma, regarded him as their countryman; he was favoured by the articles of treaty with the duke of Normandy; and above all, his party was eſpouſed by earl Godwin, the moſt powerful nobleman in the kingdom, eſpecially in the province of Weſſex, the chief ſeat

r W. Malm. p. 74. s Chron. Sax. p. 154. W. Malm. p. 76.

of

of the ancient Engliſh. Affairs were likely to terminate in a civil war; when, by the interpoſition of the nobility of both parties, a compromiſe was made; and it was agreed that Harold ſhould enjoy, together with London, all the provinces north of the Thames, while the poſſeſſion of the ſouth ſhould remain to Hardicanute; and till that prince ſhould appear and take poſſeſſion of his dominions, Emma fixed her reſidence at Wincheſter, and eſtabliſhed her authority over her ſon's ſhare of the partition.

CHAP. III.

MEANWHILE Robert, Duke of Normandy, died in a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and being ſucceeded by a ſon, yet a minor, the two Engliſh princes, Alfred and Edward, who found no longer any countenance or protection in that country, gladly embraced the opportunity of paying a viſit, with a numerous retinue, to their mother Emma, who ſeemed to be placed in a ſtate of ſo much power and ſplendor at Wincheſter. But the face of affairs ſoon wore a melancholy aſpect. Earl Godwin had been gained by the arts of Harold, who promiſed to eſpouſe the daughter of that nobleman; and while the treaty was yet a ſecret, theſe two tyrants laid a plan for the deſtruction of the Engliſh princes. Alfred was invited to London by Harold with many profeſſions of friendſhip; but when he had reached Guilford, he was ſet upon by Godwin's vaſſals, about ſix hundred of his train were murdered in the moſt cruel manner, he himſelf was taken priſoner, his eyes were put out, and he was conducted to the monaſtery of Ely, where he died ſoon after [t]. Edward and Emma, appriſed of the fate which was awaiting them, fled beyond ſea, the former into

[t] H. Hunt. p. 365. Ypod. Neuſter. p. 434. Hoveden, p. 438. Chron. Mailr. p. 156. Higden, p. 277. Chron. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 39. Sim. Dun. p. 179. Abbas Rieval. p. 366. 374. Brompton, p. 935. Gul. Gem. lib. 7. cap. 11. Math. Weſt. p. 209. Flor. Wigorn. p. 622. Alur. Beverl. p. 118.

Normandy,

CHAP. III. Normandy, the latter into Flanders. While Harold, triumphing in his bloody policy, took possession, without resistance, of all the dominions assigned to his brother.

THIS is the only memorable action performed, during a reign of four years, by this prince, who gave so bad a specimen of his character, and whose bodily accomplishments alone are known to us by his appellation of *Harefoot*, which he acquired from his agility in running and walking. He died on the 14th of April, 1039; little regretted or esteemed by his subjects; and left the succession open to his brother, Hardicanute.

HARDICANUTE.

1039. HARDICANUTE, or Canute the Hardy, that is, the robust (for he too is chiefly known by his bodily accomplishments), though, by remaining so long in Denmark, he had been deprived of his share in the partition of the kingdom, had not abandoned his pretensions; and he had determined, before Harold's death, to recover by arms, what he had lost, either by his own negligence, or by the necessity of his affairs. On pretence of paying a visit to the queen dowager in Flanders, he had assembled a fleet of sixty sail, and was preparing to make a descent on England, when intelligence of his brother's death induced him to sail immediately to London, where he was received in triumph, and acknowledged king without opposition.

THE first act of Hardicanute's government afforded his subjects a bad prognostic of his future conduct. He was so enraged at Harold, for depriving him of his share of the kingdom, and for the cruel treatment of his brother Alfred, that, in an impotent desire of revenge against the dead, he ordered his body to be dug up, and to be thrown into the Thames: And when it was found by some fishermen,

fiſhermen, and buried in London, he ordered it again to be dug up, and to be thrown again into the river: But it was fiſhed up a ſecond time, and then interred with great ſecrecy. Godwin, equally ſervile and inſolent, ſubmitted to be his inſtrument in that unnatural and brutal action.

THAT nobleman knew that he was univerſally believed to have been an accomplice in the barbarity exerciſed on Alfred, and that he was on that account obnoxious to Hardicanute; and perhaps he hoped, by diſplaying this rage againſt Harold's memory, to juſtify himſelf from having had any participation in his counſels. But prince Edward being invited over by the king, immediately on his appearance, preferred an accuſation againſt Godwin for the murder of Alfred, and demanded juſtice for that crime. Godwin, in order to appeaſe the king, made him a magnificent preſent of a galley with a gilt ſtern, rowed by fourſcore men, who wore each of them a gold bracelet on his arm, weighing ſixteen ounces, and were armed and clothed in the moſt ſumptuous manner. Hardicanute, pleaſed with the ſplendor of this ſpectacle, quickly forgot his brother's murder; and on Godwin's ſwearing that he was innocent of the crime, he allowed him to be acquitted.

THOUGH Hardicanute, before his acceſſion, had been called over by the vows of the Engliſh, he ſoon loſt the affections of the nation by his miſconduct; but nothing appeared more grievous to them, than his renewing the impoſition of Danegelt, and obliging the nation to pay a great ſum of money to the fleet which brought him from Denmark. The diſcontents ran high in many places: In Worceſter the populace roſe, and put to death two of the collectors. The king, enraged at this oppoſition, ſwore vengeance againſt the city, and ordered three noblemen, Godwin, duke of Weſſex, Siward, duke of Northumberland, and Leofric, duke of Mercia, to execute his menaces with the utmoſt rigour.

They

CHAP. III. They were obliged to set fire to the city, and deliver it up to be plundered by their soldiers; but they saved the lives of the inhabitants, whom they confined in a small island of the Severn, called Bevery, till, by their intercession, they were able to appease the king, and obtain the pardon of the supplicants.

THIS violent government was of short duration. Hardicanute died in two years after his accession, at the nuptials of a Danish lord, which he had honoured with his presence. His usual habits of intemperance were so well known, that, notwithstanding his robust constitution, his sudden death gave as little surprise as it did sorrow to his subjects.

EDWARD the CONFESSOR.

1041. THE English, on the death of Hardicanute, saw a favourable opportunity for recovering their liberty, and for shaking off the Danish yoke, under which they had so long laboured. Sweyn, king of Norway, the eldest son of Canute, was absent; and as the two last kings had died without issue, none of that race presented himself, nor any whom the Danes could support as successor to the throne. Prince Edward was fortunately at court on his brother's demise; and though the descendants of Edmond Ironside were the true heirs of the Saxon family, yet their absence in so remote a country as Hungary, appeared a sufficient reason for their exclusion to a people like the English, so little accustomed to observe a regular order in the succession of their monarchs. All delays might be dangerous; and the present occasion must hastily be embraced; while the Danes, without concert, without a leader, astonished at the present incident, and anxious only for their personal safety, durst not oppose the united voice of the nation.

BUT

But this concurrence of circumſtances in favour of Edward, might have failed of its effect, had his ſucceſſion been oppoſed by Godwin, whoſe power, alliances, and abilities, gave him a great influence at all times, eſpecially amidſt thoſe ſudden opportunities which always attended a revolution of government, and which, either ſeized or neglected, commonly prove deciſive. There were oppoſite reaſons which divided men's hopes and fears with regard to Godwin's conduct. On the one hand, the credit of that nobleman lay chiefly in Weſſex, which was almoſt entirely inhabited by Engliſh: It was therefore preſumed, that he would ſecond the wiſhes of that people in reſtoring the Saxon line, and in humbling the Danes, from whom he, as well as they, had reaſon to dread, as they had already felt, the moſt grievous oppreſſions. On the other hand, there ſubſiſted a declared animoſity between Edward and Godwin, on account of Alfred's murder, of which the latter had publicly been accuſed by the prince, and which he might believe ſo deep an offence as could never, on account of any ſubſequent merits, be ſincerely pardoned. But their common friends here interpoſed; and repreſenting the neceſſity of their good correſpondence, obliged them to lay aſide all jealouſy and rancour, and concur in reſtoring liberty to their native country. Godwin only ſtipulated that Edward, as a pledge of his ſincere reconciliation, ſhould promiſe to marry his daughter Editha; and having fortified himſelf by this alliance, he ſummoned a general council at Gillingham, and prepared every meaſure for ſecuring the ſucceſſion to Edward. The Engliſh were unanimous and zealous in their reſolutions; the Danes were divided and diſpirited: Any ſmall oppoſition which appeared in this aſſembly was brow-beaten and ſuppreſſed; and Edward was crowned king, with every demonſtration of duty and affection.

The

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The triumph of the Engliſh, upon this ſignal and deciſive advantage, was at firſt attended with ſome inſult and violence againſt the Danes; but the king, by the mildneſs of his character, ſoon reconciled the latter to his adminiſtration, and the diſtinction between the two nations gradually diſappeared. The Danes were interſperſed with the Engliſh in moſt of the provinces; they ſpoke nearly the ſame language, they differed little in their manners and laws; domeſtic diſſenſions in Denmark prevented, for ſome years, any powerful invaſion from thence, which might awaken paſt animoſities; and as the Norman conqueſt, which enſued ſoon after, reduced both nations to equal ſubjection, there is no farther mention in hiſtory of any difference between them. The joy, however, of their preſent deliverance made ſuch impreſſion on the minds of the Engliſh, that they inſtituted an annual feſtival for celebrating that great event; and it was obſerved in ſome countries even to the time of Spellman [n].

The popularity which Edward enjoyed on his acceſſion, was not deſtroyed by the firſt act of his adminiſtration, his reſuming all the grants of his immediate predeceſſors; an attempt which is commonly attended with the moſt dangerous conſequences. The poverty of the crown convinced the nation that this act of violence was become abſolutely neceſſary; and as the loſs fell chiefly on the Danes, who had obtained large grants from the late kings, their countrymen, on account of their ſervices in ſubduing the kingdom, the Engliſh were rather pleaſed to ſee them reduced to their primitive poverty. The king's ſeverity alſo towards his mother, the queen-dowager, though expoſed to ſome more cenſure, met not with very general diſapprobation. He had hitherto lived on indifferent

[n] Spell. Gloſſary, in verbo *Hocday*.

terms

terms with that princeſs; he accuſed her of neglecting him and his brother during their adverſe fortune[w]: He remarked, that as the ſuperior qualities of Canute, and his better treatment of her, had made her entirely indifferent to the memory of Ethelred, ſhe alſo gave the preference to her children of the ſecond bed, and always regarded Hardicanute as her favourite. The ſame reaſons had probably made her unpopular in England; and though her benefactions to the monks obtained her the favour of that order, the nation was not, in general, diſpleaſed to ſee her ſtripped by Edward of immenſe treaſures which ſhe had amaſſed. He confined her, during the remainder of her life, in a monaſtery at Wincheſter; but carried his rigour againſt her no farther. The ſtories of his accuſing her of a participation in her ſon Alfred's murder, and of a criminal correſpondence with the biſhop of Wincheſter, and alſo of her juſtifying herſelf by treading barefoot, without receiving any hurt, over nine burning plough ſhares, were the inventions of the monkiſh hiſtorians, and were propagated and believed from the ſilly wonder of poſterity[x].

The Engliſh flattered themſelves that, by the acceſſion of Edward, they were delivered for ever from the dominion of foreigners; but they ſoon found that this evil was not yet entirely removed. The king had been educated in Normandy; and had contracted many intimacies with the natives of that country, as well as an affection for their manners[y]. The court of England was ſoon filled with Normans, who, being diſtinguiſhed both by the favour of Edward, and by a degree of cultivation ſuperior to that which was attained by the Engliſh in thoſe ages, ſoon rendered their language, cuſtoms, and laws, faſhionable in the kingdom. The ſtudy of the French tongue became general among the

[w] Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 237. [x] Higden, p. 277.
[y] Ingulf, p. 62.

 people.

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people. The courtiers affected to imitate that nation in their drefs, equipage, and entertainments: Even the lawyers employed a foreign language in their deeds and papers [x]: But above all, the church felt the influence and dominion of thofe ftrangers: Ulf and William, two Normans, who had formerly been the king's chaplains, were created bifhops of Dorchefter and London. Robert, a Norman alfo, was promoted to the fee of Canterbury [y], and always enjoyed the higheft favour of his mafter, of which his abilities rendered him not unworthy. And though the king's prudence, or his want of authority, made him confer almoft all the civil and military employments on the natives, the ecclefiaftical preferments fell often to the fhare of the Normans; and as the latter poffeffed Edward's confidence, they had fecretly a great influence on public affairs, and excited the jealoufy of the Englifh, particularly of Earl Godwin [z].

THIS powerful nobleman, befides being duke or earl of Weffex, had the counties of Kent and Suffex annexed to his government. His eldeft fon, Sweyn, poffeffed the fame authority in the counties of Oxford, Berks, Glocefter, and Hereford: And Harold, his fecond fon, was duke of Eaft-Anglia, and at the fame time governor of Effex. The great authority of this family was fupported by immenfe poffeffions and powerful alliances; and the abilities, as well as ambition, of Godwin himfelf, contributed to render it ftill more dangerous. A prince of greater capacity and vigour than Edward would have found it difficult to fupport the dignity of the crown under fuch circumftances; and as the haughty temper of Godwin made him often forget the refpect due to his prince, Edward's animofity againft him was grounded on perfonal as well as political confiderations, on recent as well as more ancient in-

x Ingulf, p. 62. y Chron. Sax. p. 161. z W. Malm. p. 80.

 juries.

juries: The king, in pursuance of his engagements, had indeed married Editha, the daughter of Godwin[a]; but this alliance became a fresh source of enmity between them. Edward's hatred of the father was transferred to that princess; and Editha, though possessed of many amiable accomplishments, could never acquire the confidence and affection of her husband. It is even pretended that, during the whole course of her life, he abstained from all commerce of love with her; and such was the absurd admiration paid to an inviolable chastity during those ages, that his conduct in this particular is highly celebrated by the monkish historians, and greatly contributed to his acquiring the title of saint and confessor[b].

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1048.

THE most popular pretence on which Godwin could ground his disaffection to the king and his administration, was to complain of the influence of the Normans in the government; and a declared opposition had thence arisen between him and these favourites. It was not long before this animosity broke into action. Eustace, count of Bologne, having paid a visit to the king, passed by Dover in his return: One of his train, being refused entrance to a lodging which had been assigned him, attempted to make his way by force, and in the contest he wounded the master of the house. The inhabitants revenged this insult by the death of the stranger; the count and his train took arms, and murdered the wounded townsman; a tumult ensued; near twenty persons were killed on each side; and Eustace, being overpowered by numbers, was obliged to save his life by flight from the fury of the populace. He hurried immediately to court, and complained of the usage he had met with: The king entered zealously into the quarrel, and was highly

[a] Chron. Sax. p. 157. [b] W. Malm. p 80. Higden, p. 277. Abbas Rieval, p. 366 377. Matth. West. p. 221. Chron. Thom. Wykes, p. 21. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 241.

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displeased that a stranger of such distinction, whom he had invited over to his court, should, without any just cause, as he believed, have felt so sensibly the insolence and animosity of his people. He gave orders to Godwin, in whose government Dover lay, to repair immediately to the place, and to punish the inhabitants for the crime: But Godwin, who desired rather to encourage than repress the popular discontents against foreigners, refused obedience, and endeavoured to throw the whole blame of the riot on the count of Bologne, and his retinue[c]. Edward, touched in so sensible a point, saw the necessity of exerting the royal authority; and he threatened Godwin, if he persisted in his disobedience, to make him feel the utmost effects of his resentment.

The earl, perceiving a rupture to be unavoidable, and pleased to embark in a cause where it was likely he should be supported by his countrymen, made preparations for his own defence, or rather for an attack on Edward. Under pretence of repressing some disorders on the Welsh frontier, he secretly assembled a great army, and was approaching the king, who resided, without any military force, and without suspicion, at Glocester[d]. Edward applied for protection to Siward, duke of Northumberland, and Leofric, duke of Mercia, two powerful noblemen, whose jealousy of Godwin's greatness, as well as their duty to the crown, engaged them to defend the king in this extremity. They hastened to him with such of their followers as they could assemble on a sudden; and finding the danger much greater than they had at first apprehended, they issued orders for mustering all the forces within their respective governments, and for marching them without delay to the defence of the king's person and authority. Edward, meanwhile, endeavoured to gain time by negociation; while Godwin, who thought the king

[c] Chron. Sax. p. 163. W. Malm. p. 81. Higden, p. 279.
[d] Chron. Sax. p. 163. W. Malm. p. 81.

entirely

entirely in his power, and who was willing to ſave appearances, fell into the ſnare; and not ſenſible that he ought to have no farther reſerve after he had proceeded ſo far, he loſt the favourable opportunity of rendering himſelf maſter of the government.

THE Engliſh, though they had no high idea of Edward's vigour and capacity, bore him great affection on account of his humanity, juſtice, and piety, as well as the long race of their native kings from whom he was deſcended; and they haſtened from all quarters to defend him from the preſent danger. His army was now ſo conſiderable, that he ventured to take the field; and marching to London, he ſummoned a great council to judge of the rebellion of Godwin and his ſons. Theſe noblemen pretended at firſt that they were willing to ſtand their trial; but having in vain endeavoured to make their adherents perſiſt in rebellion, they offered to come to London, provided they might receive hoſtages for their ſafety: This propoſal being rejected, they were obliged to diſband the remains of their forces, and have recourſe to flight. Baldwin, earl of Flanders, gave protection to Godwin and his three ſons, Gurth, Sweyn, and Toſti; the latter of whom had married the daughter of that prince; Harold and Leofwin, two other of his ſons, took ſhelter in Ireland. The eſtates of the father and ſons were confiſcated: Their governments were given to others: Queen Editha was confined in a monaſtery at Warewel: And the greatneſs of this family, once ſo formidable, ſeemed now to be totally ſupplanted and overthrown.

BUT Godwin had fixed his authority on too firm a baſis, and he was too ſtrongly ſupported by alliances, both foreign and domeſtic, not to occaſion farther diſturbances, and make new efforts for his re-eſtabliſhment. The earl of Flanders permitted 1052. him to purchaſe and hire ſhips within his harbours; and Godwin, having manned them with his fol-

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lowers, and with freebooters of all nations, put to ſea, and attempted to make a deſcent at Sandwich. The king, informed of his preparations, had equipped a conſiderable fleet, much ſuperior to that of the enemy; and the earl haſtily, before their appearance, made his retreat into the Flemiſh harbours[e]. The Engliſh court, allured by the preſent ſecurity, and deſtitute of all vigorous counſels, allowed the ſeamen to diſband, and the fleet to go to decay[f]; while Godwin, expecting this event, kept his men in readineſs for action. He put to ſea immediately, and ſailed to the Iſle of Wight, where he was joined by Harold, with a ſquadron which that nobleman had collected in Ireland. He was now maſter of the ſea; and entering every harbour in the ſouthern coaſt, he ſeized all the ſhips[g], and ſummoned his followers in thoſe counties, which had ſo long been ſubject to his government, to aſſiſt him in procuring juſtice to himſelf, his family, and his country, againſt the tyranny of foreigners. Reinforced by great numbers from all quarters, he entered the Thames; and appearing before London, threw every thing into confuſion. The king alone ſeemed reſolute to defend himſelf to the laſt extremity; but the interpoſition of the Engliſh nobility, many of whom favoured Godwin's pretenſions, made Edward hearken to terms of accommodation; and the feigned humility of the earl, who diſclaimed all intentions of offering violence to his ſovereign, and deſired only to juſtify himſelf by a fair and open trial, paved the way for his more eaſy admiſſion. It was ſtipulated, that he ſhould give hoſtages for his good behaviour, and that the primate and all the foreigners ſhould be baniſhed: By this treaty, the preſent danger of a civil war was obviated, but the authority of the crown was conſiderably impaired, or rather entirely annihilated. Edward, ſenſible that

[e] Sim. Dun. p. 186. [f] Chron. Sax. p. 166. [g] Ibid.

he

he had not power sufficient to secure Godwin's hostages in England, sent them over to his kinsman, the young duke of Normandy. CHAP. III.

GODWIN's death, which happened soon after, while he was sitting at table with the king, prevented him from farther establishing the authority which he had acquired, and from reducing Edward to still greater subjection *. He was succeeded in the government of Wessex, Sussex, Kent, and Essex, and in the office of steward of the houshold, a place of great power, by his son Harold, who was actuated by an ambition equal to that of his father, and was superior to him in address, in insinuation, and in virtue. By a modest and gentle demeanor, he acquired the good-will of Edward; at least softened that hatred which the prince had so long borne his family [h]; and gaining every day new partisans by his bounty and affability, he proceeded in a more silent, and therefore a more dangerous manner, to the increase of his authority. The king who had not sufficient vigour directly to oppose his progress, knew of no other expedient than that hazardous one, of raising him a rival in the family of Leofric, duke of Mercia, whose son Algar was invested with the government of East-Anglia, which, before the banishment of Harold, had belonged to the latter nobleman. But this policy, of balancing opposite parties, required a more steady hand to manage it than that of Edward, and naturally produced faction, and even civil broils, among nobles of such mighty and independent authority. Algar was soon after expelled his government by the intrigues and power of Harold; but being protected by Griffith, prince of Wales, who had married his daughter, as well as by the power of his father Leofric, he obliged Harold to submit to an accommodation, and was reinstated in the government of East-Anglia.

* See note [E] at the end of the volume.

[h] Brompton, p. 948.

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This peace was not of long duration: Harold, taking advantage of Leofric's death, which happened ſoon after, expelled Algar anew, and baniſhed him the kingdom: And though that nobleman made a freſh irruption into Eaſt-Anglia with an army of Norwegians, and over-ran the country, his death ſoon freed Harold from the pretenſions of ſo dangerous a rival. Edward, the eldeſt ſon of Algar, was indeed advanced to the government of Mercia; but the balance which the king deſired to eſtabliſh between thoſe potent families, was wholly loſt, and the influence of Harold greatly preponderated.

1055. THE death of Siward, duke of Northumberland, made the way ſtill more open to the ambition of that nobleman. Siward, beſides his other merits, had acquired honour to England, by his ſucceſsful conduct in the only foreign enterpriſe undertaken during the reign of Edward. Duncan, king of Scotland, was a prince of a gentle diſpoſition, but poſſeſſed not the genius requiſite for governing a country ſo turbulent, and ſo much infeſted by the intrigues and animoſities of the great. Macbeth, a powerful nobleman, and nearly allied to the crown, not content with curbing the king's authority, carried ſtill farther his peſtilent ambition: He put his ſovereign to death; chaſed Malcolm Kenmore, his ſon and heir, into England; and uſurped the crown. Siward, whoſe daughter was married to Duncan, embraced, by Edward's orders, the protection of this diſtreſſed family: He marched an army into Scotland; and having defeated and killed Macbeth in battle, he reſtored Malcolm to the throne of his anceſtors [h]. This ſervice, added to his former connections with the royal family of Scotland, brought a great acceſſion to the authority of Siward in the north; but as he had loſt his eldeſt ſon, Oſberne, in the action with Macbeth, it proved in the iſſue

[h] W. Malm. p. 79. Hoveden, p. 443. Chron. Mailr. p. 158. Buchanan, p. 115. edit. 1715.

fatal

fatal to his family. His second son, Walthoef, appeared, on his father's death, too young to be entrusted with the government of Northumberland; and Harold's influence obtained that dukedom for his own brother Tosti.

THERE are two circumstances related of Siward, which discover his high sense of honour, and his martial disposition. When intelligence was brought him of his son Osberne's death he was inconsolable; till he heard that the wound was received in the breast, and that he had behaved with great gallantry in the action. When he found his own death approaching, he ordered his servants to clothe him in a complete suit of armour; and sitting erect on the couch, with a spear in his hand, declared that in that posture, the only one worthy of a warrior, he would patiently await the fatal moment.

THE king, now worn out with cares and infirmities, felt himself far advanced in the decline of life; and having no issue himself, began to think of appointing a successor to the kingdom. He sent a deputation to Hungary, to invite over his nephew, Edward, son of his elder brother, and the only remaining heir of the Saxon line. That prince, whose succession to the crown would have been easy and undisputed, came to England with his children, Edgar, surnamed Atheling, Margaret and Christina; but his death, which happened a few days after his arrival, threw the king into new difficulties. He saw, that the great power and ambition of Harold had tempted him to think of obtaining possession of the throne on the first vacancy, and that Edgar, on account of his youth and inexperience, was very unfit to oppose the pretensions of so popular and enterprising a rival. The animosity which he had long borne to earl Godwin, made him averse to the succession of his son; and he could not, without extreme reluctance, think of an encrease of grandeur to a family which had risen on the ruins of

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royal authority, and which, by the murder of Alfred, his brother, had contributed ſo much to the weakening of the Saxon line. In this uncertainty he ſecretly caſt his eye towards his kinſman, William duke of Normandy, as the only perſon whoſe power, and reputation, and capacity, could ſupport any deſtination which he might make in his favour, to the excluſion of Harold and his family[i].

THIS famous prince was natural ſon of Robert duke of Normandy, by Harlotta, daughter of a tanner in Falaiſe[k], and was very early eſtabliſhed in that grandeur from which his birth ſeemed to have ſet him at ſo great a diſtance. While he was but nine years of age, his father had reſolved to undertake a pilgrimage to Jeruſalem; a faſhionable act of devotion, which had taken place of the pilgrimages to Rome, and which, as it was attended with more difficulty and danger, and carried thoſe religious adventurers to the firſt ſources of Chriſtianity, appeared to them more meritorious. Before his departure, he aſſembled the ſtates of the dutchy; and informing them of his deſign, he engaged them to ſwear allegiance to his natural ſon, William, whom, as he had no legitimate iſſue, he intended, in caſe he ſhould die in the pilgrimage, to leave ſucceſſor to his dominions[l]. As he was a prudent prince, he could not but foreſee the great inconveniencies which muſt attend this journey, and this ſettlement of his ſucceſſion; ariſing from the perpetual turbulency of the great, the claims of other branches of the ducal family, and the power of the French monarch: But all theſe conſiderations were ſurmounted by the prevailing zeal for pilgrimages[m]; and probably the more important they were, the more would Robert exult in ſacrificing them to what he imagined to be his religious duty.

i Ingulf, p. 68.
k Brompton, p. 910.
l W. Malm, p. 95.
m Ypod. Neuſt. p. 452.

THIS

This prince, as he had apprehended, died in his pilgrimage; and the minority of his son was attended with all those disorders which were almost unavoidable in that situation. The licentious nobles, freed from the awe of sovereign authority, broke out into personal animosities against each other, and made the whole country a scene of war and devestation[n]. Roger, count of Toni, and Alain, count of Britanny, advanced claims to the dominion of the state; and Henry I. king of France, thought the opportunity favourable for reducing the power of a vassal, who had originally acquired his settlement in so violent and invidious a manner, and who had long appeared formidable to his sovereign[o]. The regency established by Robert encountered great difficulties in supporting the government under this complication of dangers; and the young prince, when he came to maturity, found himself reduced to a very low condition. But the great qualities, which he soon displayed in the field and in the cabinet, gave encouragement to his friends, and struck a terror into his enemies. He opposed himself on all sides against his rebellious subjects, and against foreign invaders; and by his valour and conduct prevailed in every action. He obliged the French king to grant him peace on reasonable terms; he expelled all pretenders to the sovereignty; and he reduced his turbulent barons to pay submission to his authority, and to suspend their mutual animosities. The natural severity of his temper appeared in a rigorous administration of justice; and having found the happy effects of this plan of government, without which the laws in those ages became totally impotent, he regarded it as a fixed maxim, that an inflexible conduct was the first duty of a sovereign.

[n] W. Malm. p. 95. Gul. Gemet. lib. 7. cap. 1.
[o] W. Malm. p. 97.

THE

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The tranquillity which he had eſtabliſhed in his dominions, had given William leiſure to pay a viſit to the king of England during the time of Godwin's baniſhment; and he was received in a manner ſuitable to the great reputation which he had acquired, to the relation by which he was connected with Edward, and to the obligations which that prince owed to his family [p]. On the return of Godwin, and the expulſion of the Norman favourites, Robert, archbiſhop of Canterbury, had, before his departure, perſuaded Edward to think of adopting William as his ſucceſſor; a counſel which was favoured by the king's averſion to Godwin, his prepoſſeſſions for the Normans, and his eſteem of the duke. That prelate, therefore, received a commiſſion to inform William of the king's intentions in his favour; and he was the firſt perſon that opened the mind of the prince to entertain thoſe ambitious hopes [q]. But Edward, irreſolute and feeble in his purpoſe, finding that the Engliſh would more eaſily acquieſce in the reſtoration of the Saxon line, had, in the mean time, invited his brother's deſcendants from Hungary, with a view of having them recogniſed heirs to the crown. The death of his nephew, and the inexperience and unpromiſing qualities of young Edgar, made him reſume his former intentions in favour of the duke of Normandy; though his averſion to hazardous enterpriſes engaged him to poſtpone the execution, and even to keep his purpoſe ſecret from all his miniſters.

Harold, meanwhile, proceeded, after a more open manner, in increaſing his popularity, in eſtabliſhing his power, and in preparing the way for his advancement on the firſt vacancy; an event which, from the age and infirmities of the king, appeared

[p] Hoveden, p. 442. Ingulf, p. 65. Chron. Mailr. p. 157. Higden, p. 279. [q] Ingulf, p. 68. Gul. Gemet. lib. 7. cap. 31. Order. Vitalis, p. 492.

not

not very diſtant. But there was ſtill an obſtacle, which it was requiſite for him previouſly to overcome. Earl Godwin, when reſtored to his power and fortune, had given hoſtages for his good behaviour; and among the reſt, one ſon and one grandſon, whom Edward, for greater ſecurity, as has been related, had conſigned to the cuſtody of the duke of Normandy. Harold, though not aware of the duke's being his competitor, was uneaſy that ſuch near relations ſhould be detained priſoners in a foreign country; and he was afraid leſt William ſhould, in favour of Edgar, retain theſe pledges as a check on the ambition of any other pretender. He repreſented, therefore, to the king, his unfeigned ſubmiſſion to royal authority, his ſteady duty to his prince, and the little neceſſity there was, after ſuch a uniform trial of his obedience, to detain any longer thoſe hoſtages who had been required on the firſt compoſing of civil diſcords. By theſe topics, enforced by his great power, he extorted the king's conſent to releaſe them; and in order to effect his purpoſe, he immediately proceeded, with a numerous retinue, on his journey to Normandy. A tempeſt drove him on the territory of Guy count of Ponthieu, who, being informed of his quality, immediately detained him priſoner, and demanded an exorbitant ſum for his ranſom. Harold found means to convey intelligence of his ſituation to the duke of Normandy; and repreſented, that while he was proceeding to *his* court, in execution of a commiſſion from the king of England, he had met with this harſh treatment from the mercenary diſpoſition of the count of Ponthieu.

William was immediately ſenſible of the importance of the incident. He foreſaw, that if he could once gain Harold, either by favours or menaces, his way to the throne of England would be open, and Edward would meet with no farther obſtacle in executing the favourable intentions which

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he had entertained in his behalf. He ſent, therefore, a meſſenger to Guy, in order to demand the liberty of his priſoner; and that nobleman, not daring to refuſe ſo great a prince, put Harold into the hands of the Norman, who conducted him to Roüen. William received him with every demonſtration of reſpect and friendſhip; and after ſhowing himſelf diſpoſed to comply with his deſire, in delivering up the hoſtages, he took an opportunity of diſcloſing to him the great ſecret, of his pretenſions to the crown of England, and of the will which Edward intended to make in his favour. He deſired the aſſiſtance of Harold in perfecting that deſign; he made profeſſions of the utmoſt gratitude in return for ſo great an obligation; he promiſed that the preſent grandeur of Harold's family, which ſupported itſelf with difficulty under the jealouſy and hatred of Edward, ſhould receive new increaſe from a ſucceſſor, who would be ſo greatly beholden to him for his advancement. Harold was ſurpriſed at this declaration of the duke; but being ſenſible that he ſhould never recover his own liberty, much leſs that of his brother and nephew, if he refuſed the demand, he feigned a compliance with William, renounced all hopes of the crown for himſelf, and profeſſed his ſincere intention of ſupporting the will of Edward, and ſeconding the pretenſions of the duke of Normandy. William, to bind him faſter to his intereſts, beſides offering him one of his daughters in marriage, required him to take an oath that he would fulfil his promiſes; and in order to render the oath more obligatory, he employed an artifice well-ſuited to the ignorance and ſuperſtition of the age. He ſecretly conveyed under the altar, on which Harold agreed to ſwear, the reliques of ſome of the moſt revered martyrs; and when Harold had taken the oath, he ſhewed him the reliques, and admoniſhed him to obſerve religiouſly an engagement which had been ratified by ſo tremendous a

sanction [r]. The English nobleman was astonished; but dissembling his concern, he renewed the same professions, and was dismissed with all the marks of mutual confidence by the duke of Normandy.

WHEN Harold found himself at liberty, his ambition suggested casuistry sufficient to justify to him the violation of an oath, which had been extorted from him by fear, and which, if fulfilled, might be attended with the subjection of his native country to a foreign power. He continued still to practise every art of popularity; to increase the number of his partisans; to reconcile the minds of the English to the idea of his succession; to revive their hatred of the Normans; and, by an ostentation of his power and influence, to deter the timorous Edward from executing his intended destination in favour of William. Fortune, about this time, threw two incidents in his way, by which he was enabled to acquire general favour, and to increase the character which he had already attained, of virtue and abilities.

THE Welsh, though a less formidable enemy than the Danes, had long been accustomed to infest the western borders; and after committing spoil on the low countries, they usually made a hasty retreat into their mountains, where they were sheltered from the pursuit of their enemies, and were ready to seize the first favourable opportunity of renewing their depredations. Griffith, the reigning prince, had greatly distinguished himself in those incursions; and his name had become so terrible to the English, that Harold found he could do nothing more acceptable to the public, and more honourable for himself, than the suppressing of so dangerous an enemy. He formed the plan of an expedition against Wales; and having prepared some light-armed foot to pursue the natives into their fastnesses,

[r] Wace, p. 459, 460. MS. penes Carte, p. 354. W. Malm. p. 93. H. Hunt. p. 366. Hoveden, p. 449. Brompton, p. 947.

some

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ſome cavalry to ſcour the open country, and a ſquadron of ſhips to attack the ſea-coaſt, he employed at once all theſe forces againſt the Welſh, proſecuted his advantages with vigour, made no intermiſſion in his aſſaults, and at laſt reduced the enemy to ſuch diſtreſs, that, in order to prevent their total deſtruction, they made a ſacrifice of their prince, whoſe head they cut off, and ſent to Harold; and they were content to receive as their ſovereigns, two Welſh noblemen appointed by Edward to rule over them. The other incident was no leſs honourable to Harold.

Tosti, brother of this nobleman, who had been created duke of Northumberland, being of a violent tyrannical temper, had acted with ſuch cruelty and injuſtice, that the inhabitants roſe in rebellion, and chaſed him from his government. Morcar and Edwin, two brothers, who poſſeſſed great power in thoſe parts, and who were grandſons of the great duke Leofric, concurred in the inſurrection; and the former, being elected duke, advanced with an army to oppoſe Harold, who was commiſſioned by the king to reduce and chaſtiſe the Northumbrians. Before the armies came to action, Morcar, well acquainted with the generous diſpoſition of the Engliſh commander, endeavoured to juſtify his own conduct. He repreſented to Harold, that Toſti had behaved in a manner unworthy of the ſtation to which he was advanced, and no one, not even a brother, could ſupport ſuch tyranny without participating, in ſome degree, of the infamy attending it; that the Northumbrians, accuſtomed to a legal adminiſtration, and regarding it as their birth-right, were willing to ſubmit to the king, but required a governor who would pay regard to their rights and privileges; that they had been taught by their anceſtors, that death was preferable to ſervitude, and had taken the field, determined to periſh, rather than ſuffer a renewal of thoſe indignities to which

they had so long been exposed; and they trusted that Harold, on reflection, would not defend in another that violent conduct, from which he himself, in his own government, had always kept at so great a distance. This vigorous remonstrance was accompanied with such a detail of facts, so well supported, that Harold found it prudent to abandon his brother's cause; and returning to Edward, he persuaded him to pardon the Northumbrians, and to confirm Morcar in the government. He even married the sister of that nobleman[r]; and by his interest, procured Edwin, the younger brother, to be elected into the government of Mercia. Tosti in a rage departed the kingdom, and took shelter in Flanders with earl Baldwin, his farther-in-law.

By this marriage Harold broke all measures with the duke of Normandy; and William clearly perceived that he could no longer rely on the oaths and promises which he had extorted from him. But the English nobleman was now in such a situation, that he deemed it no longer necessary to dissemble. He had, in his conduct towards the Northumbrians, given such a specimen of his moderation as had gained him the affections of his countrymen. He saw that almost all England was engaged in his interests; while he himself possessed the government of Wessex, Morcar that of Northumberland, and Edwin that of Mercia. He now openly aspired to the succession; and insisted, that since it was necessary, by the confession of all, to set aside the royal family, on account of the imbecility of Edgar, the sole surviving heir, there was no one so capable of filling the throne as a nobleman of great power, of mature age, of long experience, of approved courage and abilities, who, being a native of the kingdom, would effectually secure it against the dominion and tyranny of foreigners. Edward, broken

[r] Order. Vitalis, p. 492.

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with age and infirmities, ſaw the difficulties too great for him to encounter; and though his inveterate prepoſſeſſions kept him from ſeconding the pretenſions of Harold, he took but feeble and irreſolute ſteps for ſecuring the ſucceſſion to the duke of Normandy *. While he continued in this uncertainty, he was ſurpriſed by ſickneſs, which brought him to his grave, on the fifth of January 1066, in the ſixty-fifth year of his age, and twenty-fifth of his reign.

THIS prince, to whom the monks gave the title of ſaint and confeſſor, was the laſt of the Saxon line that ruled in England. Though his reign was peaceable and fortunate, he owed his proſperity leſs to his own abilities than to the conjunctures of the times. The Danes, employed in other enterpriſes, attempted not thoſe incurſions which had been ſo troubleſome to all his predeceſſors, and fatal to ſome of them. The facility of his diſpoſition made him acquieſce under the government of Godwin and his ſon Harold; and the abilities, as well as the power, of theſe noblemen enabled them, while they were entruſted with authority, to preſerve domeſtic peace and tranquillity. The moſt commendable circumſtance of Edward's government, was his attention to the adminiſtration of juſtice, and his compiling, for that purpoſe, a body of laws, which he collected from the laws of Ethelbert, Ina, and Alfred. This compilation, though now loſt (for the laws that paſs under Edward's name were compoſed afterwards [u]), was long the object of affection to the Engliſh nation.

EDWARD the Confeſſor was the firſt that touched for the king's evil: The opinion of his ſanctity procured belief to this cure among the people: His ſucceſſors regarded it as a part of their ſtate and grandeur to uphold the ſame opinion. It has been

* See note [F] at the end of the volume.

u Spelm. in verbo *Belliva*.

continued

continued down to our time; and the practice was first dropped by the present royal family, who observed, that it could no longer give amazement even to the populace, and was attended with ridicule in the eyes of all men of understanding. CHAP. III.

HAROLD.

HAROLD had so well prepared matters before the death of Edward, that he immediately stepped into the vacant throne; and his accession was attended with as little opposition and disturbance, as if he had succeeded by the most undoubted hereditary title. The citizens of London were his zealous partisans: The bishops and clergy had adopted his cause; and all the powerful nobility, connected with him by alliance or friendship, willingly seconded his pretensions. The title of Edgar Atheling was scarcely mentioned; much less the claim of the duke of Normandy: And Harold, assembling his partisans, received the crown from their hands, without waiting for the free deliberation of the states, or regularly submitting the question to their determination [w]. If any were averse to this measure, they were obliged to conceal their sentiments; and the new prince, taking a general silence for consent, and founding his title on the supposed suffrages of the people, which appeared unanimous, was, on the day immediately succeeding Edward's death, crowned and anointed king, by Aldred archbishop of York. The whole nation seemed joyfully to acquiesce in his elevation. 1066. January.

THE first symptoms of danger which the king discovered came from abroad, and from his own

[w] G. Pict. p. 196. Ypod. Neust. p. 436. Order. Vitalis, p. 492. M. West. p. 221. W. Malm. p. 93. Ingulf. p. 68. Brompton, p. 957. Knyghton, p. 2339. H. Hunt. p. 210. Many of the historians say, that Harold was regularly elected by the states: Some, that Edward left him his successor by will.

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brother Tosti, who had submitted to a voluntary banishment in Flanders. Enraged at the successful ambition of Harold, to which he himself had fallen a victim, he filled the court of Baldwin with complaints of the injustice which he had suffered: He engaged the interest of that family against his brother: He endeavoured to form intrigues with some of the discontented nobles in England: He sent his emissaries to Norway, in order to rouse to arms the freebooters of that kingdom, and to excite their hopes of reaping advantage from the unsettled state of affairs on the usurpation of the new king: And that he might render the combination more formidable, he made a journey to Normandy; in expectation that the duke, who had married Matilda, another daughter of Baldwin, would, in revenge of his own wrongs, as well as those of Tosti, second, by his counsels and forces, the projected invasion of England[x].

The duke of Normandy, when he first received intelligence of Harold's intrigues and accession, had been moved to the highest pitch of indignation; but that he might give the better colour to his pretensions, he sent an embassy to England, upbraiding that prince with his breach of faith, and summoning him to resign immediately possession of the kingdom. Harold replied to the Norman ambassadors, that the oath, with which he was reproached, had been extorted by the well-grounded fear of violence, and could never, for that reason, be regarded as obligatory: That he had had no commission, either from the late king or the states of England, who alone could dispose of the crown, to make any tender of the succession to the duke of Normandy; and if he, a private person, had assumed so much authority, and had even voluntarily sworn to support the duke's pretensions, the oath was unlawful, and

[x] Order. Vitalis, p. 492.

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it was his duty to ſeize the firſt opportunity of breaking it: That he had obtained the crown by the unanimous ſuffrages of the people; and ſhould prove himſelf totally unworthy of their favour, did he not ſtrenuouſly maintain thoſe national liberties, with whoſe protection they had entruſted him: And that the duke, if he made any attempt by force of arms, ſhould experience the power of an united nation conducted by a prince, who, ſenſible of the obligations impoſed on him by his royal dignity, was determined that the ſame moment ſhould put a period to his life and to his government [y].

THIS anſwer was no other than William expected; and he had previouſly fixed his reſolution of making an attempt upon England. Conſulting only his courage, his reſentment, and his ambition, he overlooked all the difficulties inſeparable from an attack on a great kingdom by ſuch inferior force, and he ſaw only the circumſtances which would facilitate his enterpriſe. He conſidered that England, ever ſince the acceſſion of Canute, had enjoyed profound tranquillity, during a period of near fifty years; and it would require time for its ſoldiers, enervated by long peace, to learn diſcipline, and its generals experience. He knew that it was entirely unprovided with fortified towns, by which it could prolong the war; but muſt venture its whole fortune in one deciſive action againſt a veteran enemy, who, being once maſter of the field, would be in a condition to overrun the kingdom. He ſaw that Harold, though he had given proofs of vigour and bravery, had newly mounted a throne, which he had acquired by faction, from which he had excluded a very ancient royal family, and which was likely to totter under him by its own inſtability, much more if ſhaken by any violent external impulſe. And he hoped, that the very circumſtance of his croſſing the

[y] W. Malm. p. 99. Higden, p. 285. Matth. Weſt. p. 222. De Geſt. Angl. incerto auctore, p. 331.

 ſea,

CHAP. III. sea, quitting his own country, and leaving himself no hopes of retreat; as it would astonish the enemy by the boldness of the enterprise, would inspirit his soldiers by despair, and rouse them to sustain the reputation of the Norman arms.

The Normans, as they had long been distinguished by valour among all the European nations, had at this time attained to the highest pitch of military glory. Besides acquiring by arms such a noble territory in France, besides defending it against continual attempts of the French monarch and all its neighbours, besides exerting many acts of vigour under their present sovereign; they had, about this very time, revived their ancient fame, by the most hazardous exploits, and the most wonderful successes, in the other extremity of Europe. A few Norman adventurers in Italy had acquired such an ascendant not only over the Italians and Greeks, but the Germans and Saracens, that they expelled those foreigners, procured to themselves ample establishments, and laid the foundation of the opulent kingdom of Naples and Sicily [z]. These enterprises of men, who were all of them vassals in Normandy, many of them banished for faction and rebellion, excited the ambition of the haughty William; who disdained, after such examples of fortune and valour, to be deterred from making an attack on a neighbouring country, where he could be supported by the whole force of his principality.

The situation also of Europe inspired William with hopes, that, besides his brave Normans, he might employ against England the flower of the military force which was dispersed in all the neighbouring states. France, Germany, and the Low Countries, by the progress of the feudal institutions, were divided and subdivided into many principalities and baronies; and the possessors, enjoying the civil ju-

[z] Gul. Gemet. lib. 7. cap. 30.

risdiction within themselves, as well as the right of arms, acted, in many respects, as independent sovereigns, and maintained their properties and privileges less by the authority of laws than by their own force and valour. A military spirit had universally diffused itself throughout Europe; and the several leaders, whose minds were elevated by their princely situation, greedily embraced the most hazardous enterprises; and being accustomed to nothing from their infancy but recitals of the success attending wars and battles, they were prompted by a natural ambition to imitate those adventures, which they heard so much celebrated, and which were so much exaggerated by the credulity of the age. United, however loosely, by their duty to one superior lord, and by their connections with the great body of the community to which they belonged, they desired to spread their fame each beyond his own district; and in all assemblies, whether instituted for civil deliberations, for military expeditions, or merely for show and entertainment, to outshine each other by the reputation of strength and prowess. Hence their genius for chivalry; hence their impatience of peace and tranquillity; and hence their readiness to embark in any dangerous enterprise, how little soever interested in its failure or success.

William, by his power, his courage, and his abilities, had long maintained a pre-eminence among those haughty chieftains; and every one who desired to signalise himself by his address in military exercises, or his valour in action, had been ambitious of acquiring a reputation in the court and the armies of Normandy. Entertained with that hospitality and courtesy which distinguished the age, they had formed attachments with the prince, and greedily attended to the prospects of the signal glory and elevation which he promised them in return for their concurrence in an expedition against England.

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The more grandeur there appeared in the attempt, the more it ſuited their romantic ſpirit: The fame of the intended invaſion was already diffuſed every where: Multitudes crowded to tender to the duke their ſervice, with that of their vaſſals and retainers [a]: And William found leſs difficulty in completing his levies, than in chuſing the moſt veteran forces, and in rejecting the offers of thoſe who were impatient to acquire fame under ſo renowned a leader.

Besides theſe advantages, which William owed to his perſonal valour and good conduct; he was indebted to fortune for procuring him ſome aſſiſtance, and alſo for removing many obſtacles which it was natural for him to expect in an undertaking, in which all his neighbours were ſo deeply intereſted. Conan, count of Britanny, was his mortal enemy: In order to throw a damp upon the duke's enterpriſe, he choſe this conjuncture for reviving his claim to Normandy itſelf; and he required, that in caſe of William's ſucceſs againſt England, the poſſeſſion of that dutchy ſhould devolve to him [b]. But Conan died ſuddenly after making this demand; and Hoel, his ſucceſſor, inſtead of adopting the malignity, or, more properly ſpeaking, the prudence of his predeceſſor, zealouſly ſeconded the duke's views, and ſent his eldeſt ſon, Alain Fergant, to ſerve under him with a body of five thouſand Britons. The counts of Anjou and of Flanders encouraged their ſubjects to engage in the expedition; and even the court of France, though it might juſtly fear the aggrandizement of ſo dangerous a vaſſal, purſued not its intereſts on this occaſion with ſufficient vigour and reſolution. Philip I. the reigning monarch, was a minor; and William, having communicated his project to the council, having deſired aſſiſtance, and offered to do homage, in caſe of his ſucceſs, for the crown of England, was indeed openly or-

[a] Gul. Pictavenſis, p. 198. [b] Gul. Gemet. lib. 7. cap. 33.

dered

dered to lay aside all thoughts of the enterprise; but the earl of Flanders, his father-in-law, being at the head of the regency, favoured under-hand his levies, and secretly encouraged the adventurous nobility to inlist under the standard of the duke of Normandy. CHAP. III.

The emperor, Henry IV. besides openly giving all his vassals permission to embark in this expedition, which so much engaged the attention of Europe, promised his protection to the dutchy of Normandy during the absence of the prince, and thereby enabled him to employ his whole force in the invasion of England [c]. But the most important ally, whom William gained by his negociations, was the pope, who had a mighty influence over the ancient barons, no less devout in their religious principles, than valorous in their military enterprises. The Roman pontiff, after an insensible progress during several ages of darkness and ignorance, began now to lift his head openly above all the princes of Europe; to assume the office of a mediator, or even an arbiter, in the quarrels of the greatest monarchs; to interpose in all secular affairs; and to obtrude his dictates as sovereign laws on his obsequious disciples. It was a sufficient motive to Alexander II. the reigning pope, for embracing William's quarrel, that he alone had made an appeal to his tribunal, and rendered him umpire of the dispute between him and Harold; but there were other advantages which that pontiff foresaw must result from the conquest of England by the Norman arms. That kingdom, though at first converted by Romish missionaries, though it had afterwards advanced some farther steps towards subjection to Rome, maintained still a considerable independence in its ecclesiastical administration; and forming a world within itself, entirely separated from the rest of Europe, it

[c] Gul. Pict. p. 198.

had

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had hitherto proved inacceſſible to thoſe exorbitant claims which ſupported the grandeur of the papacy. Alexander therefore hoped, that the French and Norman barons, if ſucceſsful in their enterpriſe, might import into that country a more devoted reverence to the holy ſee, and bring the Engliſh churches to a nearer conformity with thoſe of the continent. He declared immediately in favour of William's claim; pronounced Harold a perjured uſurper; denounced excommunication againſt him and his adherents; and the more to encourage the duke of Normandy in his enterpriſe, he ſent him a conſecrated banner, and a ring with one of St. Peter's hairs in it[d]. Thus were all the ambition and violence of that invaſion covered over ſafely with the broad mantle of religion.

The greateſt difficulty which William had to encounter in his preparations, aroſe from his own ſubjects in Normandy. The ſtates of the dutchy were aſſembled at Liſlebonne; and ſupplies being demanded for the intended enterpriſe, which promiſed ſo much glory and advantage to their country, there appeared a reluctance in many members, both to grant ſums ſo much beyond the common meaſure of taxes in that age, and to ſet a precedent of performing their military ſervice at a diſtance from their own country. The duke, finding it dangerous to ſolicit them in a body, conferred ſeparately with the richeſt individuals in the province; and beginning with thoſe on whoſe affections he moſt relied, he gradually engaged all of them to advance the ſums demanded. The count of Longueville ſeconded him in this negociation; as did the count of Mortaigne, Odo biſhop of Baieux, and eſpecially William Fitz-Oſborne, count of Breteüil, and conſtable of the dutchy. Every perſon, when he himſelf was once engaged, endeavoured to bring

d Baker, p. 22. edit. 1684.

over

over others; and at last the states themselves, after stipulating that this concession should be no precedent, voted that they would assist their prince to the utmost in his intended enterprise [e].

WILLIAM had now assembled a fleet of 3000 vessels great and small [f], and had selected an army of 60,000 men from among those numerous supplies which from every quarter solicited to be received into his service. The camp bore a splendid yet a martial appearance, from the discipline of the men, the beauty and vigour of the horses, the lustre of the arms, and the accoutrements of both; but above all, from the high names of nobility who engaged under the banners of the duke of Normandy. The most celebrated were Eustace count of Boulogne, Aimeri de Thouars, Hugh d'Estaples, William d'Evreux, Geoffrey de Rotrou, Roger de Beaumont, William de Warenne, Roger de Montgomery, Hugh de Grantmesnil, Charles Martel, and Geoffrey Giffard [g]. To these bold chieftains William held up the spoils of England as the prize of their valour; and pointing to the opposite shore, called to them, that *there* was the field, on which they must erect trophies to their name, and fix their establishments.

WHILE he was making these mighty preparations, the duke, that he might encrease the number of Harold's enemies, excited the inverate rancour of Tosti, and encouraged him, in concert with Harold Halfagar, king of Norway, to infest the coasts of England. Tosti, having collected about sixty vessels in the ports of Flanders, put to sea; and after committing some depredations on the south and east coasts, he sailed to Northumberland, and was there joined by Halfagar, who came over with a great armament of three hundred sail. The combined fleets entered the Humber, and disembarked the

[e] Camden. Introd. ad Britann. p. 212. 2d edit. Gibs. Verstegan, p. 173. [f] Gul. Gemet. lib. 7. cap. 34. [g] Ordericus Vitalis, p. 501.

troops,

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troops, who began to extend their depredations on all ſides; when Morcar earl of Northumberland, and Edwin earl of Mercia, the king's brother-in-law, having haſtily collected ſome forces, ventured to give them battle. The action ended in the defeat and flight of theſe two noblemen.

Harold, informed of this defeat, haſtened with an army to the protection of his people; and expreſſed the utmoſt ardour to ſhow himſelf worthy of the crown which had been conferred upon him. This prince, though he was not ſenſible of the full extent of his danger, from the great combination againſt him, had employed every art of popularity to acquire the affections of the public; and he gave ſo many proofs of an equitable and prudent adminiſtration, that the Engliſh found no reaſon to repent the choice which they had made of a ſovereign. They flocked from all quarters to join his ſtandard; and as ſoon as he reached the enemy at Standford, he found himſelf in a condition to give them battle.
Sept. 25. The action was bloody; but the victory was deciſive on the ſide of Harold, and ended in the total rout of the Norvegians, together with the death of Toſti and Halfagar. Even the Norvegian fleet fell into the hands of Harold; who had the generoſity to give prince Olave, the ſon of Halfagar, his liberty, and allow him to depart with twenty veſſels. But he had ſcarcely time to rejoice for this victory, when he received intelligence that the duke of Normandy was landed with a great army in the ſouth of England.

The Norman fleet and army had been aſſembled, early in the ſummer, at the mouth of the ſmall river Dive, and all the troops had been inſtantly embarked; but the winds proved long contrary, and detained them in that harbour. The authority, however, of the duke, the good diſcipline maintained among the ſeamen and ſoldiers, and the great care in ſupplying them with proviſions, had prevented any diſorder; when at laſt the wind became

 favour-

favourable, and enabled them to ſail along the coaſt till they reached St. Valori. There were, however, ſeveral veſſels loſt in this ſhort paſſage; and as the wind again proved contrary, the army began to imagine that Heaven had declared againſt them, and that, notwithſtanding the pope's benediction, they were deſtined to certain deſtruction. Theſe bold warriors, who deſpiſed real dangers, were very ſubject to the dread of imaginary ones; and many of them began to mutiny, ſome of them even to deſert their colours; when the duke, in order to ſupport their drooping hopes, ordered a proceſſion to be made with the reliques of St. Valori [h], and prayers to be ſaid for more favourable weather. The wind inſtantly changed; and as this incident happened on the eve of the feaſt of St. Michael, the tutelar ſaint of Normandy, the ſoldiers, fancying they ſaw the hand of Heaven in all theſe concurring circumſtances, ſet out with the greateſt alacrity: They met with no oppoſition on their paſſage: A great fleet, which Harold had aſſembled, and which had cruiſed all ſummer off the Iſle of Wight, had been diſmiſſed, on his receiving falſe intelligence that William, diſcouraged by contrary winds and other accidents, had laid aſide his preparations. The Norman armament, proceeding in great order, arrived, without any material loſs, at Pevenſey in Suſſex; and the army quietly diſembarked. The duke himſelf, as he leaped on ſhore, happened to ſtumble and fall; but had the preſence of mind, it is ſaid, to turn the omen to his advantage, by calling aloud that he had taken poſſeſſion of the country. And a ſoldier, running to a neighbouring cottage, plucked ſome thatch, which, as if giving him ſeizine of the kingdom, he preſented to his general. The joy and alacrity of William and his whole army was ſo great, that they were nowiſe diſcouraged, even when they

[h] Higden, p. 285. Order. Vitalis, p. 500. Matth. Paris, edit. Pariſis, anno 1644. p. 2.

heard

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heard of Harold's great victory over the Norvegians: They ſeemed rather to wait with impatience the arrival of the enemy.

The victory of Harold, though great and honourable, had proved in the main prejudicial to his intereſts, and may be regarded as the immediate cauſe of his ruin. He loſt many of his braveſt officers and ſoldiers in the action; and he diſguſted the reſt by refuſing to diſtribute the Norvegian ſpoils among them: A conduct which was little agreeable to his uſual generoſity of temper; but which his deſire of ſparing the people, in the war that impended over him from the duke of Normandy, had probably occaſioned. He haſtened, by quick marches, to reach this new invader; but though he was reinforced at London and other places with freſh troops, he found himſelf alſo weakened by the deſertion of his old ſoldiers, who from fatigue and diſcontent ſecretly withdrew from their colours. His brother Gurth, a man of bravery and conduct, began to entertain apprehenſions of the event; and remonſtrated with the king, that it would be better policy to prolong the war; at leaſt, to ſpare his own perſon in the action. He urged to him, that the deſperate ſituation of the duke of Normandy made it requiſite for that prince to bring matters to a ſpeedy deciſion, and put his whole fortune on the iſſue of a battle; but that the king of England, in his own country, beloved by his ſubjects, provided with every ſupply, had more certain, and leſs dangerous means of enſuring to himſelf the victory: That the Norman troops, elated on the one hand with the higheſt hopes, and ſeeing, on the other, no reſource in caſe of a diſcomfiture, would fight to the laſt extremity; and being the flower of all the warriors of the continent, muſt be regarded as formidable to the Engliſh: That if their firſt fire, which is always the moſt dangerous, were allowed to languiſh for want of action; if they were haraſſed with ſmall ſkirmiſhes, ſtraitened in proviſions, and fatigued with the bad

weather

weather and deep roads during the winter ſeaſon, which was approaching, they muſt fall an eaſy and a bloodleſs prey to their enemy: That if a general action were delayed, the Engliſh, ſenſible of the imminent danger to which their properties, as well as liberties, were expoſed from thoſe rapacious invaders, would haſten from all quarters to his aſſiſtance, and would render his army invincible: That at leaſt, if he thought it neceſſary to hazard a battle, he ought not to expoſe his own perſon, but reſerve, in caſe of diſaſtrous accidents, ſome reſource to the liberty and independence of the kingdom: And that having once been ſo unfortunate as to be conſtrained to ſwear, and that upon the holy reliques, to ſupport the pretenſions of the duke of Normandy, it were better that the command of the army ſhould be entruſted to another, who, not being bound by thoſe ſacred ties, might give the ſoldiers more aſſured hopes of a proſperous iſſue to the combat.

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Harold was deaf to all theſe remonſtrances: Elated with his paſt proſperity, as well as ſtimulated by his native courage, he reſolved to give battle in perſon; and for that purpoſe he drew near to the Normans, who had removed their camp and fleet to Haſtings, where they fixed their quarters. He was ſo confident of ſucceſs, that he ſent a meſſage to the duke, promiſing him a ſum of money if he would depart the kingdom without effuſion of blood: But his offer was rejected with diſdain; and William, not to be behind with his enemy in vaunting, ſent him a meſſage by ſome monks, requiring him either to reſign the kingdom, or to hold it of him in fealty, or to ſubmit their cauſe to the arbitration of the pope, or to fight him in ſingle combat. Harold replied, that the God of battles would ſoon be the arbiter of all their differences [i].

[i] Higden, p. 286.

The

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14th October.

The English and Normans now prepared themselves for this important decision; but the aspect of things, on the night before the battle, was very different in the two camps. The English spent the time in riot, and jollity, and disorder; the Normans in silence, and in prayer, and in the other functions of their religion [k]. On the morning, the duke called together the most considerable of his commanders, and made them a speech suitable to the occasion. He represented to them, that the event which they and he had long wished for, was approaching; the whole fortune of the war now depended on their swords, and would be decided in a single action: That never army had greater motives for exerting a vigorous courage, whether they considered the prize which would attend their victory, or the inevitable destruction which must ensue upon their discomfiture: That if their martial and veteran bands could once break those raw soldiers, who had rashly dared to approach them, they conquered a kingdom at one blow, and were justly entitled to all its possessions as the reward of their prosperous valour: That, on the contrary, if they remitted in the least their wonted prowess, an enraged enemy hung upon their rear, the sea met them in their retreat, and an ignominious death was the certain punishment of their imprudent cowardice: That, by collecting so numerous and brave a host, he had ensured every human means of conquest; and the commander of the enemy, by his criminal conduct, had given him just cause to hope for the favour of the Almighty, in whose hands alone lay the event of wars and battles: And that a perjured usurper, anathematized by the sovereign pontiff, and conscious of his own breach of faith, would be struck with terror on their appearance, and would prognosti-

[k] W. Malm. p. 201. De Gest. Angl. p. 332.

cate

cate to himſelf that fate which his multiplied crimes had ſo juſtly merited [l]. The duke next divided his army into three lines: The firſt, led by Montgomery, conſiſted of archers and light-armed infantry: The ſecond, commanded by Martel, was compoſed of his braveſt battalions, heavy armed, and ranged in cloſe order: His cavalry, at whoſe head he placed himſelf, formed the third line; and were ſo diſpoſed, that they ſtretched beyond the infantry, and flanked each wing of the army [m]. He ordered the ſignal of battle to be given; and the whole army, moving at once, and ſinging the hymn or ſong of Roland, the famous peer of Charlemagne [n], advanced in order and with alacrity towards the enemy.

Harold had ſeized the advantage of a riſing ground, and having likewiſe drawn ſome trenches to ſecure his flanks, he reſolved to ſtand upon the defenſive, and to avoid all action with the cavalry, in which he was inferior. The Kentiſh men were placed in the van; a poſt which they had always claimed as their due: The Londoners guarded the ſtandard: And the king himſelf, accompanied by his two valiant brothers, Gurth and Leofwin, diſmounting, placed himſelf at the head of his infantry, and expreſſed his reſolution to conquer, or to periſh in the action. The firſt attack of the Normans was deſperate, but was received with equal valour by the Engliſh; and after a furious combat, which remained long undecided, the former, overcome by the difficulty of the ground, and hard preſſed by the enemy, began firſt to relax their vigour, then to retreat; and confuſion was ſpreading among the ranks, when William, who found himſelf on the brink of deſtruction, haſtened with a ſelect band to the relief of his diſmayed forces. His

[l] H. Hunt. p. 368. Brompton, p. 959. Gul. Pict. p. 201.
[m] Gul. Pict. 201. Order Vital. p. 501. [n] W. Malm. p. 101. Higden, p. 286. Matth. Weſt. p. 223. Du Cange's Gloſſary in verbo *Cantilena Rolandi*.

 preſence

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presence restored the action; the English were obliged to retire with loss; and the duke, ordering his second line to advance, renewed the attack with fresh forces, and with redoubled courage. Finding that the enemy, aided by the advantage of ground, and animated by the example of their prince, still made a vigorous resistance, he tried a stratagem, which was very delicate in its management, but which seemed advisable in his desperate situation, where, if he gained not a decisive victory, he was totally undone: He commanded his troops to make a hasty retreat, and to allure the enemy from their ground by the appearance of flight. The artifice succeeded against those unexperienced soldiers, who, heated by the action, and sanguine in their hopes, precipitately followed the Normans into the plain. William gave orders, that at once the infantry should face about upon their pursuers, and the cavalry make an assault upon their wings, and both of them pursue the advantage, which the surprise and terror of the enemy must give them in that critical and decisive moment. The English were repulsed with great slaughter, and driven back to the hill; where, being rallied by the bravery of Harold, they were able, notwithstanding their loss, to maintain the post, and continue the combat. The duke tried the same stratagem a second time with the same success; but even after this double advantage, he still found a great body of the English, who, maintaining themselves in firm array, seemed determined to dispute the victory to the last extremity. He ordered his heavy armed infantry to make an assault upon them; while his archers, placed behind, should gall the enemy, who were exposed by the situation of the ground, and who were intent in defending themselves against the swords and spears of the assailants. By this disposition he at last prevailed: Harold was slain by an arrow, while he was combating with great bravery at the head of his men:

 His

His two brothers ſhared the ſame fate: And the Engliſh, diſcouraged by the fall of thoſe princes, gave ground on all ſides, and were purſued with great ſlaughter by the victorious Normans. A few troops, however, of the vanquiſhed had ſtill the courage to turn upon their purſuers; and attacking them in deep and miry ground, obtained ſome revenge for the ſlaughter and diſhonour of the day. But the appearance of the duke obliged them to ſeek their ſafety by flight; and darkneſs ſaved them from any farther purſuit by the enemy.

Thus was gained by William, duke of Normandy, the great and deciſive victory of Haſtings, after a battle which was fought from morning till ſunſet, and which ſeemed worthy, by the heroic valour diſplayed by both armies, and by both commanders, to decide the fate of a mighty kingdom. William had three horſes killed under him; and there fell near fifteen thouſand men on the ſide of the Normans: The loſs was ſtill more conſiderable on that of the vanquiſhed; beſides the death of the king and his two brothers. The dead body of Harold was brought to William, and was generouſly reſtored without ranſom to his mother. The Norman army left not the field of battle without giving thanks to Heaven in the moſt ſolemn manner for their victory: And the prince, having refreſhed his troops, prepared to puſh to the utmoſt his advantage againſt the divided, diſmayed, and diſcomfited Engliſh.

APPENDIX I.

The ANGLO-SAXON GOVERNMENT and MANNERS.

First Saxon Government——Succession of the kings ——The Wittenagemot——The aristocracy—— The several orders of men——Courts of justice—— Criminal law —— Rules of proof——Military force——Public revenue——Value of money—— Manners.

Appendix I.

THE government of the Germans, and that of all the northern nations, who established themselves on the ruins of Rome, was always extremely free; and those fierce people, accustomed to independence and inured to arms, were more guided by persuasion than authority, in the submission which they paid to their princes. The military despotism, which had taken place in the Roman empire, and which, previously to the irruption of those conquerors, had sunk the genius of men, and destroyed every noble principle of science and virtue, was unable to resist the vigorous efforts of a free people*; and Europe, as from a new epoch, rekindled her ancient spirit, and shook off the base servitude to arbitrary will and authority under which she had so long laboured. The free constitutions then established, however impaired by the encroachments of succeeding princes, still preserve an air of independence and legal administration, which distinguish the European nations; and if that part of the

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the globe maintain ſentiments of liberty, honour, equity, and valour, ſuperior to the reſt of mankind, it owes theſe advantages chiefly to the ſeeds implanted by thoſe generous barbarians.

First Saxon government.

THE Saxons, who ſubdued Britain, as they enjoyed great liberty in their own country, obſtinately retained that invaluable poſſeſſion in their new ſettlement; and they imported into this iſland the ſame principles of independence, which they had inherited from their anceſtors. The chieftains (for ſuch they were, more properly than kings or princes) who commanded them in thoſe military expeditions, ſtill poſſeſſed a very limited authority; and as the Saxons exterminated, rather than ſubdued, the ancient inhabitants, they were indeed tranſplanted into a new territory, but preſerved unaltered all their civil and military inſtitutions. The language was pure Saxon; even the names of places, which often remain while the tongue entirely changes, were almoſt all affixed by the conquerors; the manners and cuſtoms were wholly German; and the ſame picture of a fierce and bold liberty, which is drawn by the maſterly pencil of Tacitus, will ſuit thoſe founders of the Engliſh government. The king, ſo far from being inveſted with arbitrary power, was only conſidered as the firſt among the citizens; his authority depended more on his perſonal qualities than on his ſtation; he was even ſo far on a level with the people, that a ſtated price was fixed for his head, and a legal fine was levied upon his murderer, which, though proportionate to his ſtation, and ſuperior to that paid for the life of a ſubject, was a ſenſible mark of his ſubordination to the community.

Succeſſion of the kings.

IT is eaſy to imagine, that an independent people, ſo little reſtrained by law and cultivated by ſcience, would not be very ſtrict in maintaining a regular ſucceſſion of their princes. Though they paid great regard to the royal family, and aſcribed to it an undiſputed ſuperiority, they either had no rule, or

none

none that was steadily observed, in filling the vacant throne; and present convenience, in that emergency, was more attended to than general principles. We are not, however, to suppose that the crown was considered as altogether elective; and that a regular plan was traced by the constitution for supplying, by the suffrages of the people, every vacancy made by the demise of the first magistrate. If any king left a son of an age and capacity fit for government, the young prince naturally stepped into the throne: If he was a minor, his uncle, or the next prince of the blood, was promoted to the government, and left the sceptre to his posterity: Any sovereign, by taking previous measures with the leading men, had it greatly in his power to appoint his successor: All these changes, and indeed the ordinary administration of government, required the express concurrence, or at least the tacit acquiescence of the people; but possession, however obtained, was extremely apt to secure their obedience, and the idea of any right, which was once excluded, was but feeble and imperfect. This is so much the case in all barbarous monarchies, and occurs so often in the history of the Anglo-Saxons, that we cannot consistently entertain any other notion of their government. The idea of an hereditary succession in authority is so natural to men, and is so much fortified by the usual rule in transmitting private possessions, that it must retain a great influence on every society, which does not exclude it by the refinements of a republican constitution. But as there is a material difference between government and private possessions, and every man is not as much qualified for exercising the one, as for enjoying the other, a people, who are not sensible of the general advantages attending a fixed rule, are apt to make great leaps in the succession, and frequently to pass over the person, who, had he possessed the requisite years and abilities, would have been thought entitled to the

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the sovereignty. Thus, these monarchies are not, strictly speaking, either elective or hereditary; and though the destination of a prince may often be followed in appointing his successor, they can as little be regarded as wholly testamentary. The states by their suffrage may sometimes establish a sovereign; but they more frequently recognise the person whom they find established: A few great men take the lead; the people, overawed and influenced, acquiesce in the government; and the reigning prince, provided he be of the royal family, passes undisputedly for the legal sovereign.

The Wittenagemot.

It is confessed, that our knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon history and antiquities is too imperfect to afford us means of determining, with certainty, all the prerogatives of the crown and privileges of the people, or of giving an exact delineation of that government. It is probable also, that the constitution might be somewhat different in the different kingdoms of the Heptarchy, and that it changed considerably during the course of six centuries, which elapsed from the first invasion of the Saxons till the Norman conquest [o]. But most of these differences and changes, with their causes and effects, are unknown to us: It only appears, that at all times, and in all the kingdoms, there was a national council, called a Wittenagemot, or assembly of the wise men (for that is the import of the term), whose consent was requisite for enacting laws and for ratifying the chief acts of public administration. The preambles to all the laws of Ethelbert, Ina, Alfred,

[o] We know of one change, not inconsiderable, in the Saxon constitution. The Saxon Annals, p. 49, inform us, that it was in early times the prerogative of the king to name the dukes, earls, aldermen, and sheriffs of the counties. Asser, a contemporary writer, informs us, that Alfred deposed all the ignorant aldermen, and appointed men of more capacity in their place: Yet the Laws of Edward the Confessor, § 35. say expresly, that the heretoghs or dukes, and the sheriffs, were chosen by the freeholders in the folkmote, a county court, which was assembled once a year, and where all the freeholders swore allegiance to the king.

Edward

Edward the Elder, Athelſtan, Edmond, Edgar, Ethelred, and Edward the Confeſſor; even thoſe to the laws of Canute, though a kind of conqueror; put this matter beyond controverſy, and carry proofs every where of a limited and legal government. But who were the conſtituent members of this Wittenagemot has not been determined with certainty by antiquaries. It is agreed, that the biſhops and abbots[p] were an eſſential part; and it is alſo evident, from the tenor of thoſe ancient laws, that the Wittenagemot enacted ſtatutes which regulated the eccleſiaſtical as well as civil government, and that thoſe dangerous principles, by which the church is totally ſevered from the ſtate, were hitherto unknown to the Anglo-Saxons[q]. It alſo appears, that the aldermen, or governors of counties, who after the Daniſh times were often called earls *, were admitted into this council, and gave their conſent to the public ſtatutes. But beſides the prelates and aldermen, there is alſo mention of the wites, or wiſemen, as a component part of the Wittenagemot; but who *theſe* were, is not ſo clearly aſcertained by the laws or the hiſtory of that period. The matter would probably be of difficult diſcuſſion, even were it examined impartially; but as our modern parties have choſen to divide on this point, the queſtion has been diſputed with the greater obſtinacy, and the arguments on both ſides have become, on that account, the more captious and deceitful. Our monarchical faction maintain, that theſe *wites*, or *ſapientes*, were the judges, or men learned in the law: The popular faction aſſert them to be repreſentatives of the boroughs, or what we now call the commons.

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[p] Sometimes abbeſſes were admitted; at leaſt they often ſign the king's charters or grants. Spelm. Gloſſ. in verbo *parliamentum*.

[q] Wilkins paſſim.

* See Note [G] at the end of the volume.

THE

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The expreſſions employed by all ancient hiſtorians, in mentioning the Wittenagemot, ſeem to contradict the latter ſuppoſition. The members are almoſt always called the *principes*, *ſatrapæ*, *optimates*, *magnates*, *proceres*; terms which ſeem to ſuppoſe an ariſtocracy, and to exclude the commons. The boroughs alſo, from the low ſtate of commerce, were ſo ſmall and ſo poor, and the inhabitants lived in ſuch dependence on the great men [r], that it ſeems nowiſe probable they would be admitted as a part of the national councils. The commons are well known to have had no ſhare in the governments eſtabliſhed by the Franks, Burgundians, and other northern nations; and we may conclude that the Saxons, who remained longer barbarous and uncivilized than thoſe tribes, would never think of conferring ſuch an extraordinary privilege on trade and induſtry. The military profeſſion alone was honourable among all thoſe conquerors: The warriors ſubſiſted by their poſſeſſions in land: They became conſiderable by their influence over their vaſſals, retainers, tenants, and ſlaves: And it requires ſtrong proof to convince us that they would admit any of a rank ſo much inferior as the burgeſſes, to ſhare with them in the legiſlative authority. Tacitus indeed affirms, that, among the ancient Germans, the conſent of all the members of the community was required in every important deliberation; but he ſpeaks not of repreſentatives; and this ancient practice, mentioned by the Roman hiſtorian, could only have place in ſmall tribes, where every citizen might, without inconvenience, be aſſembled upon any extraordinary emergency. After principalities became extenſive; after the difference of property had formed diſtinctions more important than thoſe which aroſe from perſonal

[r] Brady's Treatiſe of Engliſh Boroughs, p. 3, 4, 5, &c.

ſtrength

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ſtrength and valour; we may conclude, that the national aſſemblies muſt have been more limited in their number, and compoſed only of the more conſiderable citizens.

But though we muſt exclude the burgeſſes, or commons, from the Saxon Wittenagemot, there is ſome neceſſity for ſuppoſing that this aſſembly conſiſted of other members than the prelates, abbots, aldermen, and the judges or privy council. For as all theſe, excepting ſome of the eccleſiaſtics [s], were anciently appointed by the king, had there been no other legiſlative authority, the royal power had been in a great meaſure abſolute, contrary to the tenor of all the hiſtorians, and to the practice of all the northern nations. We may therefore conclude, that the more conſiderable proprietors of land were, without any election, conſtituent members of the national aſſembly: There is reaſon to think that forty hides, or between four and five thouſand acres, was the eſtate requiſite for entitling the poſſeſſor to this honourable privilege. We find a paſſage in an ancient author [t], by which it appears, that a perſon of very noble birth, even one allied to the crown, was not eſteemed a *princeps* (the term uſually employed by ancient hiſtorians when the Wittenagemot is mentioned) till he had acquired a fortune of that amount. Nor need we imagine that the public council would become diſorderly or confuſed by admitting ſo great a multitude. The landed property of England was probably in few hands during the Saxon times; at leaſt during the latter part of that period:

[s] There is ſome reaſon to think that the biſhops were ſometimes choſen by the Wittenagemot, and confirmed by the king. Eddius, cap. 2. The abbots in the monaſteries of royal foundation were anciently named by the king; though Edgar gave the monks the election, and only reſerved to himſelf the ratification. This deſtination was afterwards frequently violated; and the abbots, as well as biſhops, were afterwards all appointed by the king; as we learn from Ingulf, a writer contemporary to the conqueſt.

[t] Hiſt. Elienſis, lib. 2. cap. 40.

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period: And as men had hardly any ambition to attend those public councils, there was no danger of the assembly's becoming too numerous for the dispatch of the little business which was brought before them.

The aristocracy.

It is certain, that whatever we may determine concerning the constituent members of the Wittenagemot, in whom, with the king, the legislature resided, the Anglo-Saxon government, in the period preceding the Norman conquest, was become extremely aristocratical: The royal authority was very limited; the people, even if admitted to that assembly, were of little or no weight and consideration. We have hints given us in historians, of the great power and riches of particular noblemen: And it could not but happen, after the abolition of the Heptarchy, when the king lived at a distance from the provinces, that those great proprietors, who resided on their estates, would much augment their authority over their vassals and retainers, and over all the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. Hence the immeasurable power assumed by Harold, Godwin, Leofric, Siward, Morcar, Edwin, Edric, and Alfric, who controlled the authority of the kings, and rendered themselves quite necessary in the government. The two latter, though detested by the people, on account of their joining a foreign enemy, still preserved their power and influence; and we may therefore conclude, that their authority was founded, not on popularity, but on family rights and possessions. There is one Athelstan mentioned in the reign of the king of that name, who is called alderman of all England, and is said to be half-king; though the monarch himself was a prince of valour and abilities [u]. And we find, that in the latter Saxon times, and in these alone, the

[u] Hist. Ramef § 3. p. 387.

great

great offices went from father to ſon, and became in a manner hereditary in the families [w].

The circumſtances attending the invaſions of the Danes would alſo ſerve much to encreaſe the power of the principal nobility. Thoſe freebooters made unexpected inroads on all quarters; and there was a neceſſity that each county ſhould reſiſt them by its own force, and under the conduct of its own nobility and its own magiſtrates. For the ſame reaſon that a general war, managed by the united efforts of the whole ſtate, commonly augments the power of the crown; thoſe private wars and inroads turned to the advantage of the aldermen and nobles.

Among that military and turbulent people, ſo averſe to commerce and the arts, and ſo little enured to induſtry, juſtice was commonly very ill adminiſtered, and great oppreſſion and violence ſeem to have prevailed. Theſe diſorders would be encreaſed by the exorbitant power of the ariſtocracy; and would, in their turn, contribute to encreaſe it. Men, not daring to rely on the guardianſhip of the laws, were obliged to devote themſelves to the ſervice of ſome chieftain, whoſe orders they followed, even to the diſturbance of the government, or the injury of their fellow-citizens, and who afforded them, in return, protection from any inſult or injuſtice by ſtrangers. Hence we find, by the extracts which Dr. Brady has given us from Domeſday, that almoſt all the inhabitants, even of towns, had placed themſelves under the clientſhip of ſome particular nobleman, whoſe patronage they purchaſed by annual payments, and whom they were obliged to conſider as their ſovereign, more than the king

[w] Roger Hoveden, giving the reaſon why William the Conqueror made Coſpatric earl of Northumberland, ſays, *Nam ex materno ſanguine attinebat ad eum honor illius comitatûs. Erat enim ex matre Algitha, filia Uthredi comitis.* See alſo Sim. Dun. p. 205. We ſee in thoſe inſtances the ſame tendency towards rendering offices hereditary, which took place, during a more early period, on the continent; and which had already produced there its full effect.

 himſelf,

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himself, or even the legislature [x]. A client, though a freeman, was supposed so much to belong to his patron, that his murderer was obliged by law to pay a fine to the latter, as a compensation for his loss; in like manner as he paid a fine to the master for the murder of his slave [y]. Men who were of a more considerable rank, but not powerful enough, each to support himself by his own independent authority, entered into formal confederacies with each other, and composed a kind of separate community, which rendered itself formidable to all aggressors. Dr. Hickes has preserved a curious Saxon bond of this kind, which he calls a *Sodalitium*, and which contains many particulars characteristical of the manners and customs of the times [z]. All the associates are there said to be gentlemen of Cambridgeshire; and they swear before the holy reliques to observe their confederacy, and to be faithful to each other: They promise to bury any of the associates who dies, in whatever place he had appointed; to contribute to his funeral charges, and to attend at his interment; and whoever is wanting in this last duty, binds himself to pay a measure of honey. When any of the associates is in danger, and calls for the assistance of his fellows, they promise, besides flying to his succour, to give information to the sheriff; and if he be negligent in protecting the person exposed to danger, they engage to levy a fine of one pound upon him: If the president of the society himself be wanting in this particular, he binds himself to pay one pound; unless he has the reasonable excuse of sickness, or of duty to his superior. When any of the associates is murdered, they are to exact eight pounds from the murderer; and if he refuse to pay it, they are to prosecute him for the sum at

x Brady's Treatise of Boroughs, 3, 4, 5, &c. The case was the same with the freemen in the country. See Pref. to his Hist. p. 8, 9, 10, &c.

y LL. Edw. Conf. § 8. apud Ingulf.

z Dissert. Epist. p. 21.

their

their joint expence. If any of the associates who happens to be poor kill a man, the society are to contribute, by a certain proportion, to pay his fine: A mark a-piece if the fine be 700 shillings; less if the person killed be a clown or ceorle; the half of that sum again if he be a Welshman. But where any of the associates kills a man, wilfully and without provocation, he must himself pay the fine. If any of the associates kill any of his fellows in a like criminal manner, besides paying the usual fine to the relations of the deceased, he must pay eight pounds to the society, or renounce the benefit of it: In which case, they bind themselves, under the penalty of one pound, never to eat or drink with him, except in the presence of the king, bishop, or alderman. There are other regulations to protect themselves and their servants from all injuries, to revenge such as are committed, and to prevent their giving abusive language to each other; and the fine, which they engage to pay for this last offence, is a measure of honey.

It is not to be doubted but a confederacy of this kind must have been a great source of friendship and attachment; when men lived in perpetual danger from enemies, robbers, and oppressors, and received protection chiefly from their personal valour, and from the assistance of their friends or patrons. As animosities were then more violent, connexions were also more intimate, whether voluntary or derived from blood: The most remote degree of propinquity was regarded: An indelible memory of benefits was preserved: Severe vengeance was taken for injuries, both from a point of honour, and as the best means of future security: And the civil union being weak, many private engagements were contracted in order to supply its place, and to procure men that safety which the laws and their own innocence were not alone able to insure to them.

On

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On the whole, notwithſtanding the ſeeming liberty, or rather licentiouſneſs of the Anglo-Saxons, the great body even of the free citizens, in thoſe ages, really enjoyed much leſs true liberty than where the execution of the laws is the moſt ſevere, and where ſubjects are reduced to the ſtricteſt ſubordination and dependence on the civil magiſtrate. The reaſon is derived from the exceſs itſelf of that liberty. Men muſt guard themſelves at any price againſt inſults and injuries; and where they receive not protection from the laws and magiſtrate, they will ſeek it by ſubmiſſion to ſuperiors, and by herding in ſome private confederacy which acts under the direction of a powerful leader. And thus all anarchy is the immediate cauſe of tyranny, if not over the ſtate, at leaſt over many of the individuals.

Security was provided by the Saxon laws to all members of the Wittenagemot, both in going and returning, *except they were notorious thieves and robbers.*

The ſeveral orders of men.

The German Saxons, as the other nations of that continent, were divided into three ranks of men, the noble, the free, and the ſlaves [a]. This diſtinction they brought over with them into Britain.

The nobles were called thanes; and were of two kinds, the king's thanes and leſſer thanes. The latter ſeem to have been dependent on the former; and to have received lands, for which they paid rent, ſervices, or attendance in peace and war [b]. We know of no title which raiſed any one to the rank of thane except noble birth and the poſſeſſion of land. The former was always much regarded by all the German nations, even in their moſt barbarous ſtate; and as the Saxon nobility, having little credit, could ſcarcely burthen their eſtates with much debt, and as the commons had little trade or induſtry by which

[a] Nithard. Hiſt. lib. 4. [b] Spelm. Feus and Tenures, p. 40.

they

they could accumulate riches, these two ranks of men, even though they were not separated by positive laws, might remain long distinct, and the noble families continue many ages in opulence and splendour. There were no middle ranks of men, that could gradually mix with their superiors, and insensibly procure to themselves honour and distinction. If by any extraordinary accident a mean person acquired riches, a circumstance so singular made him be known and remarked; he became the object of envy, as well as of indignation, to all the nobles; he would have great difficulty to defend what he had acquired; and he would find it impossible to protect himself from oppression, except by courting the patronage of some great chieftain, and paying a large price for his safety.

THERE are two statutes among the Saxon laws which seem calculated to confound those different ranks of men; that of Athelstan, by which a merchant, who had made three long sea-voyages on his own account, was entitled to the quality of thane[c]; and that of the same prince, by which a ceorle or husbandman, who had been able to purchase five hides of land, and had a chapel, a kitchen, a hall, and a bell, was raised to the same distinction[d]. But the opportunities were so few, by which a merchant or ceorle could thus exalt himself above his rank, that the law could never overcome the reigning prejudices; the distinction between noble and base blood would still be indelible; and the well-born thanes would entertain the highest contempt for those legal and factitious ones. Though we are not informed of any of these circumstances by ancient historians, they are so much founded on the nature of things, that we may admit them as a necessary and infallible consequence of the situation of the kingdom during those ages.

c Wilkins, p. 71.
Wilkins, p. 70.

d Selden, Titles of Honour, p. 515.

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THE cities appear by Domesday-book to have been at the conquest little better than villages [e]. York itself, though it was always the second, at least the third [f] city in England, and was the capital of a great province, which never was thoroughly united with the rest, contained then but 1418 families [g]. Malmesbury tells us [h], that the great distinction between the Anglo-Saxon nobility, and the French or Norman, was, that the latter built magnificent and stately castles; whereas the former consumed their immense fortunes in riot and hospitality, and in mean houses. We may thence infer, that the arts in general were much less advanced in England than in France; a greater number of idle servants and retainers lived about the great families; and as these, even in France, were powerful enough to disturb the execution of the laws, we may judge of the authority acquired by the aristocracy in England. When earl Godwin besieged the Confessor in London, he summoned from all parts his huscarles, or houseceorles and retainers, and thereby constrained his sovereign to accept of the conditions which he was pleased to impose upon him.

THE lower rank of freemen were denominated ceorles among the Anglo-Saxons; and, where they were industrious, they were chiefly employed in husbandry: Whence a ceorle and a husbandman became in a manner synonymous terms. They cultivated the farms of the nobility or thanes, for which

e Winchester, being the capital of the West Saxon monarchy, was anciently a considerable city. Gul. Pict. p. 210.

f Norwich contained 738 houses, Exeter 315, Ipswich 538, Northampton 60, Hertford 146, Canterbury 262, Bath 64, Southampton 84, Warwick 225. See Brady of Boroughs, p. 3, 4, 5, 6, &c. These are the most considerable he mentions. The account of them is extracted from Domesday book.

g Brady's Treatise of Boroughs, p. 10. There were six wards, besides the archbishop's palace; and five of these wards contained the number of families here mentioned, which, at the rate of five persons to a family, makes about 7000 souls The sixth ward was laid waste.

h P. 102. See also de Gest. Angl. p. 333.

they paid rent; and they seem to have been removeable at pleasure. For there is little mention of leases among the Anglo-Saxons: The pride of the nobility, together with the general ignorance of writing, must have rendered those contracts very rare, and must have kept the husbandmen in a dependent condition. The rents of farms were then chiefly paid in kind[i].

But the most numerous rank by far in the community seems to have been the slaves or villains, who were the property of their lords, and were consequently incapable themselves of possessing any property. Dr. Brady assures us, from a survey of Domesday-book[k], that, in all the counties of England, the far greater part of the land was occupied by them, and that the husbandmen, and still more the socmen, who were tenants that could not be removed at pleasure, were very few in comparison. This was not the case with the German nations, as far as we can collect from the account given us by Tacitus. The perpetual wars in the Heptarchy, and the depredations of the Danes, seem to have been the cause of this great alteration with the Anglo-Saxons. Prisoners taken in battle, or carried off in the frequent inroads, were then reduced to slavery; and became, by right of war[l], entirely at the disposal of their lords. Great property in the nobles, especially if joined to an irregular administration of justice, naturally favours the power of the aristocracy; but still more so, if the practice of slavery be admitted, and has become very common. The nobility not only possess the influence which always attends riches, but also the power which the laws give them over their slaves and villains. It then becomes difficult, and almost impossible, for a

i LL. Inæ, § 70. These laws fixed the rents for a hide; but it is difficult to convert it into modern measures. k General Preface to his Hist. p. 7, 8, 9, &c. l LL. Edg. § 14. apud. Spelm. Conc. vol. i. p 471.

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private man to remain altogether free and independent.

There were two kinds of ſlaves among the Anglo-Saxons; houſehold ſlaves, after the manner of the ancients, and prædial or ruſtic, after the manner of the Germans [m]. Theſe latter reſembled the ſerfs, which are at preſent to be met with in Poland, Denmark, and ſome parts of Germany. The power of a maſter over his ſlaves was not unlimited among the Anglo-Saxons, as it was among their anceſtors. If a man beat out his ſlave's eye or teeth, the ſlave recovered his liberty [n]: If he killed him, he paid a fine to the king; provided the ſlave died within a day after the wound or blow: Otherwiſe it paſſed unpuniſhed [o]. The ſelling of themſelves or children to ſlavery was always the practice among the German nations [p], and was continued by the Anglo-Saxons [q].

The great lords and abbots among the Anglo-Saxons poſſeſſed a criminal juriſdiction within their territories, and could puniſh, without appeal, any thieves or robbers whom they caught there [r]. This inſtitution muſt have had a very contrary effect to that which was intended, and muſt have procured robbers a ſure protection on the lands of ſuch noblemen as did not ſincerely mean to diſcourage crimes and violence.

Courts of Juſtice.

But though the general ſtrain of the Anglo-Saxon government ſeems to have become ariſtocratical, there were ſtill conſiderable remains of the ancient democracy, which were not indeed ſufficient to protect the loweſt of the people, without the patronage of ſome great lord, but might give ſecurity, and even ſome degree of dignity, to the gentry or inferior nobility. The adminiſtration of juſtice, in par-

[m] Spelm Gloſſ. in verb. *Servus*. [n] LL. Ælf. § 20. [o] Ibid. § 17. [p] Tacit. de Morib. Germ. [q] LL. Inæ, § 11. LL. Ælf. § 12. [r] Higden, lib. 1. cap. 50. LL. Edw. Conf. § 26. Spelm. Conc. vol. i. p. 415. Gloſſ. in verb. *Haligemot* et *Infangenthefe*.

ticular,

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ticular, by the courts of the decennary, the hundred, and the county, was well calculated to defend general liberty, and to restrain the power of the nobles. In the county courts, or shiremotes, all the freeholders were assembled twice a year, and received appeals from the inferior courts. They there decided all causes, ecclesiastical as well as civil; and the bishop, together with the alderman or earl, presided over them [s]. The affair was determined in a summary manner, without much pleading, formality, or delay, by a majority of voices; and the bishop and alderman had no further authority than to keep order among the freeholders, and interpose with their opinion [t]. Where justice was denied during three sessions by the hundred, and then by the county court, there lay an appeal to the king's court [u]; but this was not practised on slight occasions. The aldermen received a third of the fines levied in those courts [w]; and as most of the punishments were then pecuniary, this perquisite formed a considerable part of the profits belonging to his office. The two thirds also, which went to the king, made no contemptible part of the public revenue. Any freeholder was fined who absented himself thrice from these courts [x].

As the extreme ignorance of the age made deeds and writings very rare, the county or hundred court was the place where the most remarkable civil transactions were finished, in order to preserve the memory of them, and prevent all future disputes. Here testaments were promulgated, slaves manumitted, bargains of sale concluded; and sometimes, for greater security, the most considerable of these deeds were inserted in the blank leaves of the parish Bible, which thus became a kind of register too sa-

[s] LL. Edg. § 5. Wilkins, p. 78. LL. Canut. § 17. Wilkins, p. 136. [t] Hickes, Dissert. Epist. p. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.
[u] LL. Edg. § 2. Wilkins, p. 77. LL. Canut. § 18. apud Wilkins, p. 136. [w] LL. Edw. Conf. § 31. [x] LL. Ethelst. § 20.

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cred to be falſified. It was not unuſual to add to the deed an imprecation on all ſuch as ſhould be guilty of that crime [y].

Among a people, who lived in ſo ſimple a manner as the Anglo-Saxons, the judicial power is always of greater importance than the legiſlative. There were few or no taxes impoſed by the ſtates: There were few ſtatutes enacted; and the nation was leſs governed by laws than by cuſtoms, which admitted a great latitude of interpretation. Though it ſhould, therefore, be allowed that the Wittenagemot was altogether compoſed of the principal nobility, the county-courts, where all the freeholders were admitted, and which regulated all the daily occurrences of life, formed a wide baſis for the government, and were no contemptible checks on the ariſtocracy. But there is another power ſtill more important than either the judicial or legiſlative; to wit, the power of injuring or ſerving by immediate force and violence, for which it is difficult to obtain redreſs in courts of juſtice. In all extenſive governments, where the execution of the laws is feeble, this power naturally falls into the hands of the principal nobility; and the degree of it which prevails, cannot be determined ſo much by the public ſtatutes, as by ſmall incidents in hiſtory, by particular cuſtoms, and ſometimes by the reaſon and nature of things. The Highlands of Scotland have long been entitled by law to every privilege of Britiſh ſubjects; but it was not till very lately that the common people could in fact enjoy theſe privileges.

The powers of all the members of the Anglo-Saxon government are diſputed among hiſtorians and antiquaries: The extreme obſcurity of the ſubject, even though faction had never entered into the queſtion, would naturally have begotten thoſe controverſies. But the great influence of the lords over

y Hickes, Diſſert. Epiſt.

their

their ſlaves and tenants, the clientſhip of the burghers, the total want of a middling rank of men, the extent of the monarchy, the looſe execution of the laws, the continued diſorders and convulſions of the ſtate; all theſe circumſtances evince that the Anglo-Saxon government became at laſt extremely ariſtocratical; and the events, during the period immediately preceding the conqueſt, confirm this inference or conjecture.

Criminal law.

Both the puniſhments inflicted by the Anglo-Saxon courts of judicature, and the methods of proof employed in all cauſes, appear ſomewhat ſingular, and are very different from thoſe which prevail at preſent among all civilized nations.

We muſt conceive that the ancient Germans were little removed from the original ſtate of nature: The ſocial confederacy among them was more martial than civil: They had chiefly in view the means of attack or defence againſt public enemies, not thoſe of protection againſt their fellow-citizens: Their poſſeſſions were ſo ſlender and ſo equal, that they were not expoſed to great danger; and the natural bravery of the people made every man truſt to himſelf, and to his particular friends, for his defence or vengeance. This defect in the political union drew much cloſer the knot of particular confederacies: An inſult upon any man was regarded by all his relations and aſſociates as a common injury: They were bound by honour, as well as by a ſenſe of common intereſt, to revenge his death, or any violence which he had ſuffered: They retaliated on the aggreſſor by like acts of violence; and if he were protected, as was natural and uſual, by his own clan, the quarrel was ſpread ſtill wider, and bred endleſs diſorders in the nation.

The Friſians, a tribe of the Germans, had never advanced beyond this wild and imperfect ſtate of ſociety; and the right of private revenge ſtill re-

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mained among them unlimited and uncontrolled [z]. But the other German nations, in the age of Tacitus, had made one ſtep farther towards completing the political or civil union. Though it ſtill continued to be an indiſpenſable point of honour for every clan to revenge the death or injury of a member, the magiſtrate had acquired a right of interpoſing in the quarrel, and of accommodating the difference. He obliged the perſon maimed or injured, and the relations of one killed, to accept of a preſent from the aggreſſor and his relations [a], as a compenſation for the injury [b], and to drop all farther proſecution of revenge. That the accommodation of one quarrel might not be the ſource of more, this preſent was fixed and certain, according to the rank of the perſon killed or injured, and was commonly paid in cattle, the chief property of thoſe rude and uncultivated nations. A preſent of this kind gratified the revenge of the injured family, by the loſs which the aggreſſor ſuffered: It ſatisfied their pride, by the ſubmiſſion which it expreſſed: It diminiſhed their regret for the loſs or injury of a kinſman, by their acquiſition of new property: And thus general peace was for a moment reſtored to the ſociety [c].

But when the German nations had been ſettled ſome time in the provinces of the Roman empire, they made ſtill another ſtep towards a more cultivated life, and their criminal juſtice gradually improved and refined itſelf. The magiſtrate, whoſe office it was to guard public peace, and to ſuppreſs private animoſities, conceived himſelf to be injured by every injury done to any of his people; and beſides the compenſation to the perſon who ſuffered,

z LL. Friſ. tit. 2. apud Lindenbrog. p. 491. a LL. Æthelb. § 23. LL. Ælf. § 27. b Called by the Saxons *mægbota*.

c Tacit. de Morib. Germ. The author ſays, that the price of the compoſition was fixed; which muſt have been by the laws and the interpoſition of the magiſtrates.

or to his family, he thought himself entitled to exact a fine called the Fridwit, as an atonement for the breach of peace, and as a reward for the pains which he had taken in accommodating the quarrel. When this idea, which is so natural, was once suggested, it was willingly received both by sovereign and people. The numerous fines which were levied, augmented the revenue of the king: And the people were sensible that he would be more vigilant in interposing with his good offices, when he reaped such immediate advantage from them; and that injuries would be less frequent, when, besides compensation to the person injured, they were exposed to this additional penalty [d]. Appendix I.

This short abstract contains the history of the criminal jurisprudence of the northern nations for several centuries. The state of England in this particular, during the period of the Anglo-Saxons, may be judged of by the collection of ancient laws, published by Lambard and Wilkins. The chief purport of these laws is not to prevent or entirely suppress private quarrels, which the legislator knew to be impossible, but only to regulate and moderate them. The laws of Alfred enjoin, that if any one know that his enemy or aggressor, after doing him an injury, resolves to keep within his own house, *and his own lands* [e], he shall not fight him till he require compensation for the injury. If he be strong enough to besiege him in his house, he may do it for seven days without attacking him; and if the aggressor be willing, during that time, to surrender himself and his arms, his adversary may detain him thirty days; but is afterwards obliged to restore him safe to his kindred, *and be content with the compen-*

[d] Besides paying money to the relations of the deceased and to the king, the murderer was also obliged to pay the master of a slave or vassal a sum as the compensation for his loss. This was called the *Manbote*. See Spel. Gloss. in verb. *Fredum*, *Manbot*.

[e] The addition of these last words in Italics appears necessary from what follows in the same law.

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sation. If the criminal fly to the temple, that sanctuary must not be violated. Where the assailant has not force sufficient to besiege the criminal in his house, he must apply to the alderman for assistance; and if the alderman refuse aid, the assailant must have recourse to the king: And he is not allowed to assault the house, till after this supreme magistrate has refused assistance. If any one meet with his enemy, and be ignorant that he was resolved to keep within his own lands, he must, before he attack him, require him to surrender himself prisoner, and deliver up his arms; in which case he may detain him thirty days: But if he refuse to deliver up his arms, it is then lawful to fight him. A slave may fight in his master's quarrel: A father may fight in his son's with any one, except with his master[f].

It was enacted by king Ina, that no man should take revenge for an injury till he had first demanded compensation, and had been refused it[g].

King Edmond, in the preamble to his laws, mentions the general misery occasioned by the multiplicity of private feuds and battles; and he establishes several expedients for remedying this grievance. He ordains, that if any one commit murder, he may, with the assistance of his kindred, pay within a twelvemonth the fine of his crime; and if they abandon him, he shall alone sustain the deadly feud or quarrel with the kindred of the murdered person: His own kindred are free from the feud, but on condition that they neither converse with the criminal, nor supply him with meat or *other necessaries*: If any of them, after renouncing him, receive him into their house, *or give him assistance*, they are finable to the king, and are involved in the feud. If the kindred of the murdered person take revenge on any but the criminal himself *after he is aban-*

[f] LL. Ælfr. § 28. Wilkins, p. 43. [g] LL. Inæ, § 9.

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doned by his kindred, all their property is forfeited, and they are declared to be enemies to the king and all his friends [h]. It is alſo ordained, that the fine for murder ſhall never be remitted by the king [i]; and that no criminal ſhall be killed who flies to the church, or any of the king's towns [k]; and the king himſelf declares, that his houſe ſhall give no protection to murderers, till they have ſatisfied the church by their penance, and the kindred of the deceaſed, by making compenſation [l]. The method appointed for tranſacting this compoſition is found in the ſame law [m].

THESE attempts of Edmond, to contract and diminiſh the feuds, were contrary to the ancient ſpirit of the northern barbarians, and were a ſtep towards a more regular adminiſtration of juſtice. By the Salic law, any man might, by a public declaration, exempt himſelf from his family quarrels: But then he was conſidered by the law as no longer belonging to the family; and he was deprived of all right of ſucceſſion, as the puniſhment of his cowardice [n].

THE price of the king's head, or his weregild, as it was then called, was by law 30,000 thriſmas, near 1300 pounds of preſent money. The price of the prince's head was 15,000 thriſmas; that of a biſhop's or alderman's 8000; a ſheriff's 4000; a thane's or clergyman's 2000; a ceorle's 266. Theſe prices were fixed by the laws of the Angles. By the Mercian law, the price of a ceorle's head was 200 ſhillings; that of a thane's ſix times as much; that of a king's ſix times more [o]. By the laws of Kent, the price of the archbiſhop's head was higher than that of the king's [p]. Such reſpect was then paid to the eccleſiaſtics! It muſt be underſtood, that where a perſon was unable or unwilling to pay

[h] LL. Edm. § 1. Wilkins, p. 73. [i] LL. Edm. § 3.
[k] Ibid. § 2. [l] Ibid. § 4. [m] Ibid. § 7. [n] Tit. 63.
[o] Wilkins, p. 71, 72. [p] LL. Elthredi, apud Wilkins, p. 110.

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the fine, he was put out of the protection of law, and the kindred of the deceased had liberty to punish him as they thought proper.

SOME antiquarians [q] have thought that these compensations were only given for man-slaughter, not for wilful murder: But no such distinction appears in the laws; and it is contradicted by the practice of all the other barbarous nations [r], by that of the ancient Germans [s], and by that curious monument above mentioned, of Saxon antiquity, preserved by Hickes. There is indeed a law of Alfred's, which makes wilful murder capital [t]; but this seems only to have been an attempt of that great legislator towards establishing a better police in the kingdom, and it probably remained without execution. By the laws of the same prince, a conspiracy against the life of the king might be redeemed by a fine [u].

THE price of all kinds of wounds was likewise fixed by the Saxon laws: A wound of an inch long under the hair, was paid with one shilling: One of a like size in the face two shillings: Thirty shillings for the loss of an ear, and so forth [w]. There seems not to have been any difference made, according to the dignity of the person. By the law of Ethelbert, any one who committed adultery with his neighbour's wife was obliged to pay him a fine, and buy him another wife [x].

THESE institutions are not peculiar to the ancient Germans. They seem to be the necessary progress of criminal jurisprudence among every free people, where the will of the sovereign is not implicitly obeyed. We find them among the ancient Greeks during the time of the Trojan war. Compositions

[q] Tyrrel, Introduct. vol. i. p. 126. Carte, vol. i. p 366.

[r] Lindenbrogius, passim.

[s] Tac. de Mor. Germ.

[t] LL. Ælf. § 12. Wilkins, p. 29. It is probable, that by wilful murder Alfred means a treacherous murder, committed by one who has no declared feud with another.

[u] LL. Ælf. § 4. Wilkins, p. 35.

[w] LL. Ælf. § 40. See also LL. Ethelb. § 34, &c.

[x] LL. Ethelb. § 32.

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for murder are mentioned in Neſtor's ſpeech to Achilles in the ninth Iliad, and are called αποιναι. The Iriſh, who never had any connections with the German nations, adopted the ſame practice till very lately; and the price of a man's head was called among them his *eric*; as we learn from Sir John Davis. The ſame cuſtom ſeems alſo to have prevailed among the Jews [y].

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Theft and robbery were frequent among the Anglo-Saxons. In order to impoſe ſome check upon theſe crimes, it was ordained that no man ſhould ſell or buy any thing above twenty-pence value, except in open market [z]; and every bargain of ſale muſt be executed before witneſſes [a]. Gangs of robbers much diſturbed the peace of the country; and the law determined, that a tribe of banditti, conſiſting of between ſeven and thirty-five perſons, was to be called a *turma*, or troop: Any greater company was denominated an army [b]. The puniſhments for this crime were various, but none of them capital [c]. If any man could track his ſtolen cattle into another's ground, the latter was obliged to ſhow the tracks out of it, or pay their value [d].

Rebellion, to whatever exceſs it was carried, was not capital, but might be redeemed by a ſum of money [e]. The legiſlators, knowing it impoſſible to prevent all diſorders, only impoſed a higher fine on breaches of the peace committed in the king's court, or before an alderman or biſhop. An alehouſe too ſeems to have been conſidered as a privileged place; and any quarrels that aroſe there were more ſeverely puniſhed than elſewhere [f].

[y] Exod. xxi. 29, 30. [z] LL. Æthelſt. § 12. [a] Ibid. § 10. 12. LL. Edg. apud Wilkins, p. 80. LL. Ethelredi, § 4. apud Wilkins, p. 103. Hloth. and Eadm. § 16. LL. Canut. § 22.

[b] LL. Inæ, § 12. [c] Ibid. § 37. [d] LL. Æthelſt. § 2. Wilkins, p. 63. [e] LL. Ethelredi, apud Wilkins, p. 110. LL. Ælf. § 4. Wilkins, p. 35. [f] LL. Hloth. & Eadm. § 12, 13. LL. Ethelr. apud Wilkins, p. 117.

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Rules of proof.

If the manner of puniſhing crimes among the Anglo-Saxons appear ſingular, the proofs were not leſs ſo; and were alſo the natural reſult of the ſituation of thoſe people. Whatever we may imagine concerning the uſual truth and ſincerity of men who live in a rude and barbarous ſtate, there is much more falſehood, and even perjury, among them, than among civilized nations: Virtue, which is nothing but a more enlarged and more cultivated reaſon, never flouriſhes to any degree, nor is founded on ſteady principles of honour, except where a good education becomes general; and where men are taught the pernicious conſequences of vice, treachery, and immorality. Even ſuperſtition, though more prevalent among ignorant nations, is but a poor ſupply for the defects in knowledge and education: Our European anceſtors, who employed every moment the expedient of ſwearing on extraordinary croſſes and reliques, were leſs honourable in all engagements than their poſterity, who, from experience, have omitted thoſe ineffectual ſecurities. This general proneneſs to perjury was much encreaſed by the uſual want of diſcernment in judges, who could not diſcuſs an intricate evidence, and were obliged to number, not weigh, the teſtimony of the witneſſes [g]. Hence the ridiculous practice of obliging men to bring compurgators, who, as they did not pretend to know any thing of the fact, expreſſed upon oath, that they believed the perſon ſpoke true; and theſe compurgators were in ſome caſes multiplied to the number of three hundred [h]. The practice alſo of ſingle combat was employed by moſt nations on the continent as a remedy againſt falſe evidence [i]; and though it was frequently drop-

[g] Sometimes the laws fixed eaſy general rules for weighing the credibility of witneſſes. A man whoſe life was eſtimated at 120 ſhillings, counterbalanced ſix ceorles, each of whoſe lives was only valued at twenty ſhillings, and his oath was eſteemed equivalent to that of all the ſix. See Wilkins, p. 72.

[h] Præf. Nicol. ad Wilkins, p. 11.

[i] LL. Burgund. cap. 45. LL. Lomb. lib. 2. tit. 55. cap. 34.

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ped, from the oppoſition of the clergy, it was continually revived from experience of the falſehood attending the teſtimony of witneſſes [k]. It became at laſt a ſpecies of juriſprudence: The caſes were determined by law, in which the party might challenge his adverſary, or the witneſſes, or the judge himſelf [l]: And though theſe cuſtoms were abſurd, they were rather an improvement on the methods of trial which had formerly been practiſed among thoſe barbarous nations, and which ſtill prevailed among the Anglo-Saxons.

When any controverſy about a fact became too intricate for thoſe ignorant judges to unravel, they had recourſe to what they called the judgment of God; that is, to fortune: Their methods of conſulting this oracle were various. One of them was the deciſion by the *croſs*: It was practiſed in this manner: When a perſon was accuſed of any crime, he firſt cleared himſelf by oath, and he was attended by eleven compurgators. He next took two pieces of wood, one of which was marked with the ſign of the croſs, and wrapping both up in wool, he placed them on the altar, or on ſome celebrated relique. After ſolemn prayers for the ſucceſs of the experiment, a prieſt, or, in his ſtead, ſome unexperienced youth, took up one of the pieces of wood, and if he happened upon that which was marked with the figure of a croſs, the perſon was pronounced innocent; if otherwiſe, guilty [m]. This practiſe, as it aroſe from ſuperſtition, was aboliſhed by it in France. The emperor, Lewis the Debonnaire, prohibited that method of trial, not becauſe it was uncertain, but leſt that ſacred figure, ſays he, of the croſs ſhould be proſtituted in common diſputes and controverſies [n].

[k] LL. Longob. lib 2. tit. 55. cap. 23. apud Lidenb. p. 661.
[l] See Deſfontaines and Beaumanoir. [m] LL. Friſon. tit. 14. apud Lidenbrogium, p. 496. [n] Du Cange, in verb. *Crux.*

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THE ordeal was another established method of trial among the Anglo-Saxons. It was practised either by boiling water or red-hot iron. The former was appropriated to the common people; the latter to the nobility. The water or iron was consecrated by many prayers, masses, fastings, and exorcisms [o]; after which the person accused either took up a stone sunk in the water [p] to a certain depth, or carried the iron to a certain distance; and his hand being wrapped up, and the covering sealed for three days, if there appeared, on examining it, no marks of burning, he was pronounced innocent; if otherwise, guilty [q]. The trial by cold water was different: The person was thrown into consecrated water; if he swam, he was guilty; if he sunk, innocent [r]. It is difficult for us to conceive how any innocent person could ever escape by the one trial, or any criminal be convicted by the other. But there was another usage admirably calculated for allowing every criminal to escape who had confidence enough to try it. A consecrated cake, called a corsned, was produced; which if the person could swallow and digest, he was pronounced innocent [s].

Military force.

THE feudal law, if it had place at all among the Anglo-Saxons, which is doubtful, was not certainly extended over all the landed property, and was not attended with those consequences of homage, reliefs [t], worship, marriage, and other burthens, which were inseparable from it in the kingdoms of the continent. As the Saxons expelled, or almost entirely destroyed the ancient Britons, they planted

[o] Spelm. in verb. *Ordeal* Parker, p. 155. Lindenbrog. p. 1299.
[p] LL. Inæ, § 77. [q] Sometimes the person accused walked barefoot over red-hot iron. [r] Spelm. in verb. *Ordealium*.
[s] Spelm. in verb. *Corsned*. Parker, p. 156. Text. Roffens. p. 33.
[t] On the death of an alderman, a greater or lesser thane, there was a payment made to the king of his best arms; and this was called his heriot: But this was not of the nature of a relief. See Spelm. of Tenures, p. 2. The value of this heriot was fixed by Canute's laws, § 69.

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themſelves in this iſland on the ſame footing with their anceſtors in Germany, and found no occaſion for the feudal inſtitutions [u], which were calculated to maintain a kind of ſtanding army, always in readineſs to ſuppreſs any inſurrection among the conquered people. The trouble and expence of defending the ſtate in England lay equally upon all the land; and it was uſual for every five hides to equip a man for the ſervice. The *trinoda neceſſitas*, as it was called, or the burthen of military expeditions, of repairing highways, and of building and ſupporting bridges, was inſeparable from landed property, even though it belonged to the church or monaſteries, unleſs exempted by a particular charter [w]. The ceorles or huſbandmen were provided with arms, and were obliged to take their turn in military duty [x]. There were computed to be 243,600 hides in England [y]; conſequently the ordinary military force of the kingdom conſiſted of 48,720 men; though, no doubt, on extraordinary occaſions, a greater number might be aſſembled. The king and nobility had ſome military tenants, who were called Sithcun-men [z]. And there were ſome lands annexed to the office of aldermen, and to other offices; but theſe probably were not of great extent, and were poſſeſſed only during pleaſure, as in the commencement of the feudal law in other countries of Europe.

Public revenue.

THE revenue of the king ſeems to have conſiſted chiefly in his demeſnes, which were large; and in the tolls and impoſts which he probably levied at diſcretion on the boroughs and ſea-ports that lay within his demeſnes. He could not alienate any part of the crown lands, even to religious uſes, without the conſent of the ſtates [a]. Danegelt was a land-

[u] Bracton de Acqu. rér. domin. lib. 2. cap. 16. See more fully Spelman of feuds and tenures, and Craigius de jure feud. lib. 1. dieg. 7. [w] Spelm. Conc. vol. i. p. 256. [x] Inæ, § 51. [y] Spelm. of feuds and tenures, p. 17. [z] Spelm. Conc. vol. i. p. 195. [a] Ibid. p. 340.

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tax of a ſhilling a hide, impoſed by the ſtates[b], either for payment of the ſums exacted by the Danes, or for putting the kingdom in a poſture of defence againſt thoſe invaders[c].

Value of money.

The Saxon pound, as likewiſe that which was coined for ſome centuries after the conqueſt, was near three times the weight of our preſent money: There were forty-eight ſhillings in the pound, and five pence in a ſhilling[d]; conſequently a Saxon ſhilling was near a fifth heavier than ours, and a Saxon penny near three times as heavy[e]. As to the value of money in thoſe times, compared to commodities, there are ſome, though not very certain means of computation. A ſheep, by the laws of Athelſtan, was eſtimated at a ſhilling; that is, fifteen pence of our money. The fleece was two-fifths of the value of the whole ſheep[f]; much above its preſent eſtimation; and the reaſon probably was, that the Saxons, like the ancients, were little acquainted with any clothing but what was made of wool. Silk and cotton were quite unknown: Linen was not much uſed. An ox was computed at ſix times the value of a ſheep; a cow at four[g]. If we ſuppoſe that the cattle in that age, from the defects in huſbandry, were not ſo large as they are at preſent in England, we may compute that money was then near ten times of greater value. A horſe was valued at about thirty-ſix ſhillings of our money, or thirty Saxon ſhillings[h]; a mare a third leſs. A man at three pounds[i]. The board wages of a child the firſt year was eight ſhillings, together with a cow's paſture in ſummer, and an ox's in winter[k]. William of Malmeſbury mentions it as a remarkable high price that William Rufus gave fifteen marks for a horſe, or about thirty pounds of our

b Chron. Sax. p. 128. c LL. Edw. Con. § 12. d LL. Ælf. § 40. e Fleetwood's Chron. Pretioſum, p. 27, 28, &c. f LL. Inæ, § 69. g Wilkins, p. 66. h Ibid, p. 126. i Ibid. k LL. Inæ, § 38.

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present money [l]. Between the years 900 and 1000, Ednoth bought a hide of land for about 118 shillings of present money [m]. This was little more than a shilling an acre, which indeed appears to have been the usual price, as we may learn from other accounts [n]. A palfrey was sold for twelve shillings about the year 966 [o]. The value of an ox in king Ethelred's time was between seven and eight shillings; a cow about six shillings [p]. Gervas of Tilbury says, that in Henry I.'s time, bread which would suffice a hundred men for a day was rated at three shillings, or a shilling of that age; for it is thought that, soon after the conquest, a pound sterling was divided into twenty shillings: A sheep was rated at a shilling, and so of other things in proportion. In Athelstan's time a ram was valued at a shilling, or four pence Saxon [q]. The tenants of Shireburn were obliged, at their choice, to pay either six pence, or four hens [r]. About 1232, the abbot of St. Albans, going on a journey, hired seven handsome stout horses; and agreed, if any of them died on the road, to pay the owner 30 shillings a piece of our present money [s]. It is to be remarked, that in all ancient times the raising of corn, especially wheat, being a species of manufactory, that commodity always bore a higher price, compared to cattle, than it does in our times [t]. The Saxon Chronicle tells us [u], that in the reign of Edward the Confessor there was the most terrible famine ever known; insomuch that a quarter of wheat rose to sixty pennies, or fifteen shillings of our present money. Consequently it was as dear as if it now cost seven pounds ten shillings. This much exceeds the great famine in the end of queen Elizabeth; when a quarter of wheat was sold for four

[l] P. 121. [m] Hist. Ramef. p. 415. [n] Hist. Elienf. p. 473. [o] Ibid p. 471. [p] Wilkins, p. 126. [q] Ibid. p. 56. [r] Monast. Anglic. vol. ii. p. 528. [s] Mat. Paris. [t] Fleetwood, p. 83. 94. 96. 98. [u] P. 157.

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pounds. Money in this laſt period was nearly of the ſame value as in our time. These ſevere famines are a certain proof of bad huſbandry.

On the whole, there are three things to be conſidered, wherever a ſum of money is mentioned in ancient times. Firſt, the change of denomination, by which a pound has been reduced to the third part of its ancient weight in ſilver. Secondly, the change in value by the greater plenty of money, which has reduced the ſame weight of ſilver to ten times leſs value, compared to commodities; and conſequently a pound ſterling to the thirtieth part of the ancient value. Thirdly, the fewer people and leſs induſtry, which were then to be found in every European kingdom. This circumſtance made even the thirtieth part of the ſum more difficult to levy, and cauſed any ſum to have more than thirty times greater weight and influence, both abroad and at home, than in our times; in the ſame manner that a ſum, a hundred thouſand pounds, for inſtance, is at preſent more difficult to levy in a ſmall ſtate, ſuch as Bavaria, and can produce greater effects on ſuch a ſmall community, than on England. This laſt difference is not eaſy to be calculated: But allowing that England has now ſix times more induſtry, and three times more people than it had at the conqueſt, and for ſome reigns after that period, we are upon that ſuppoſition to conceive, taking all circumſtances together, every ſum of money mentioned by hiſtorians, as if it were multiplied more than a hundred fold above a ſum of the ſame denomination at preſent.

In the Saxon times, land was divided equally among all the male children of the deceaſed, according to the cuſtom of Gavelkind. The practice of entails is to be found in thoſe times [x]. Land was chiefly of two kinds, bockland, or land held by

[x] LL. Ælf. § 37. apud Wilkins, p. 43.

book or charter, which was regarded as full property, and descended to the heirs of the possessor; and folkland, or the land held by the ceorles and common people, who were removeable at pleasure, and were indeed only tenants during the will of their lords.

Appendix I.

THE first attempt which we find in England to separate the ecclesiastical from the civil jurisdiction, was that law of Edgar, by which all disputes among the clergy were ordered to be carried before the bishop[y]. The penances were then very severe; but as a man could buy them off with money, or might substitute others to perform them, they lay easy upon the rich[z].

Manners.

WITH regard to the manners of the Anglo-Saxons we can say little, but that thay were in general a rude uncultivated people, ignorant of letters, unskilled in the mechanical arts, untamed to submission under law and government, addicted to intemperance, riot, and disorder. Their best quality was their military courage, which yet was not supported by discipline or conduct. Their want of fidelity to the prince, or to any trust reposed in them, appears strongly in the history of their later period; and their want of humanity in all their history. Even the Norman historians, notwithstanding the low state of the arts in their own country, speak of them as barbarians, when they mention the invasion made upon them by the duke of Normandy[a]. The conquest put the people in a situation of receiving slowly from abroad the rudiments of science and cultivation, and of correcting their rough and licentious manners.

[y] Wilkins. p. 83. [z] Ibid. p. 96, 97. Spelm. Conc. p. 473.
[a] Gul. Pict. p. 202.

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WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

Consequences of the battle of Hastings——Submission of the English——Settlement of the government——King's return to Normandy——Discontents of the English——Their insurrections——Rigours of the Norman government——New insurrections——New rigours of the government——Introduction of the feudal law——Innovation in ecclesiastical government——Insurrection of the Norman barons——Dispute about investitures——Revolt of prince Robert——Domesday book——The New forest——War with France——Death——and character of William the Conqueror.

NOTHING could exceed the consternation which seized the English, when they received intelligence of the unfortunate battle of Hastings, the death of their king, the slaughter of their principal nobility and of their bravest warriors, and the rout and dispersion of the remainder. But though the loss which they had sustained in that fatal action was considerable, it might have been repaired by a great nation; where the people were generally armed, and where there resided so many powerful noblemen in every province, who could have assembled their retainers, and have obliged the duke of Normandy to divide his army, and probably to waste it in a variety of actions and rencounters. It was thus that the kingdom had formerly resisted, for many years, its invaders, and had been gradually subdued, by the continued efforts of the Romans, Saxons, and Danes; and equal difficulties might have been apprehended by William in this bold and

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Consequences of the battle of Hastings.

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hazardous enterprise. But there were several vices in the Anglo-Saxon constitution, which rendered it difficult for the English to defend their liberties in so critical an emergency. The people had in a great measure lost all national pride and spirit, by their recent and long subjection to the Danes; and as Canute had, in the course of his administration, much abated the rigours of conquest, and had governed them equitably by their own laws, they regarded with the less terror the ignominy of a foreign yoke, and deemed the inconveniencies of submission less formidable than those of bloodshed, war, and resistance. Their attachment also to the ancient royal family had been much weakened, by their habits of submission to the Danish princes, and by their late election of Harold, or their acquiescence in his usurpation. And as they had long been accustomed to regard Edgar Atheling, the only heir of the Saxon line, as unfit to govern them even in times of order and tranquillity; they could entertain small hopes of his being able to repair such great losses as they had sustained, or to withstand the victorious arms of the duke of Normandy.

THAT they might not, however, be altogether wanting to themselves in this extreme necessity, the English took some steps towards adjusting their disjointed government, and uniting themselves against the common enemy. The two potent earls, Edwin and Morcar, who had fled to London with the remains of the broken army, took the lead on this occasion: In concert with Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, a man possessed of great authority and of ample revenues, they proclaimed Edgar, and endeavoured to put the people in a posture of defence, and encourage them to resist the Normans [b]. But the terror of the late defeat, and the near neighbourhood of the invaders, encreased the confusion inse-

[b] Gul. Pictav. p. 205. Order. Vitalis, p. 502. Hoveden, p. 449. Knyghton, p. 2343.

parable

parable from great revolutions; and every resolution proposed was hasty, fluctuating, tumultuary; disconcerted by fear or faction, ill planned, and worse executed.

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William, that his enemies might have no leisure to recover from their consternation, or unite their counsels, immediately put himself in motion after his victory, and resolved to prosecute an enterprise, which nothing but celerity and vigour could render finally successful. His first attempt was against Romney, whose inhabitants he severely punished, on accouut of their cruel treatment of some Norman seamen and soldiers, who had been carried thither by stress of weather, or by a mistake in their course[c]: And foreseeing that his conquest of England might still be attended with many difficulties and with much opposition, he deemed it necessary, before he should advance farther into the country, to make himself master of Dover, which would both secure him a retreat in case of adverse fortune, and afford him a safe landing-place for such supplies as might be requisite for pushing his advantages. The terror diffused by his victory at Hastings was so great, that the garrison of Dover, though numerous and well provided, immediately capitulated; and as the Normans, rushing in to take possession of the town, hastily set fire to some of the houses, William, desirous to conciliate the minds of the English by an appearance of lenity and justice, made compensation to the inhabitants for their losses[d].

The Norman army, being much distressed with a dysentery, was obliged to remain here eight days; but the duke, on their recovery, advanced with quick marches, towards London, and by his approach encreased the confusions which were already so prevalent in the English counsels. The ecclesiastics in particular, whose influence was great over

[c] Gul. Pictav. p. 204. [d] Ibid.

the

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the people, began to declare in his favour; and as most of the bishops and dignified clergymen were even then Frenchmen or Normans, the pope's bull, by which his enterprise was avowed and hallowed, was now openly insisted on as a reason for general submission. The superior learning of those prelates, which, during the Confessor's reign, had raised them above the ignorant Saxons, made their opinions be received with implicit faith; and a young prince like Edgar, whose capacity was deemed so mean, was but ill qualified to resist the impression which they made on the minds of the people. A repulse which a body of Londoners received from five hundred Norman horse, renewed in the city the terror of the great defeat at Hastings; the easy submission of all the inhabitants of Kent was an additional discouragement to them; the burning of Southwark before their eyes, made them dread a like fate to their own city; and no man any longer entertained thoughts but of immediate safety and of self-preservation. Even the earls Edwin and Morcar, in despair of making effectual resistance, retired with their troops to their own provinces; and the people thenceforth disposed themselves unanimously to yield to the victor. As soon as he passed the Thames at Wallingford, and reached Berkhamstead, Stigand the primate made submissions to him: Before he came within sight of the city, all the chief nobility, and Edgar Atheling himself, the new-elected king, came into his camp, and declared their intention of yielding to his authority [e]. They requested him to mount their throne, which they now considered as vacant; and declared to him, that as they had always been ruled by regal power, they desired to follow, in this particular, the example of their ancestors, and knew of no one more worthy than himself to hold the reins of government [f].

Submission of the English.

[e] Hoveden, p. 450. Flor. Wigorn. p. 634. [f] Gul. Pict. p. 205. Ord. Vital. p. 503.

THOUGH

THOUGH this was the great object to which the duke's enterprise tended, he feigned to deliberate on the offer; and being desirous, at first, of preserving the appearance of a legal administration, he wished to obtain a more explicit and formal consent of the English nation[g]: But Aimar of Aquitain, a man equally respected for valour in the field and for prudence in council, remonstrating with him on the danger of delay in so critical a conjuncture, he laid aside all farther scruples, and accepted of the crown which was tendered him. Orders were immediately issued to prepare every thing for the ceremony of his coronation; but as he was yet afraid to place entire confidence in the Londoners, who were numerous and warlike, he meanwhile commanded fortresses to be erected, in order to curb the inhabitants, and to secure his person and government[h].

STIGAND was not much in the duke's favour, both because he had intruded into the see on the expulsion of Robert the Norman, and because he possessed such influence and authority over the English[i] as might be dangerous to a new-established monarch. William, therefore, pretending that the primate had obtained his pall in an irregular manner from pope Benedict IX. who was himself an usurper, refused to be consecrated by him, and conferred this honour on Aldred, archbishop of York. Westminster abbey was the place appointed for that magnificent ceremony; the most considerable of the nobility, both English and Norman, attended the duke on this occasion; Aldred, in a short speech, asked the former whether they agreed to accept of William as their king; the bishop of Coutance put the same question to the latter; and both being answered with acclamations[k], Aldred administered to the duke the usual coronation oath, by which he bound himself to protect the church, to 26th Dec.

[g] Gul. Pictav. p. 205. [h] Ibid. [i] Eadmer, p. 6.
[k] Order. Vital. p. 503.

administer

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administer justice, and to repress violence: He then anointed him, and put the crown upon his head[l]. There appeared nothing but joy in the countenance of the spectators: But in that very moment there burst forth the strongest symptoms of the jealousy and animosity which prevailed between the nations, and which continually encreased during the reign of this prince. The Norman soldiers, who were placed without, in order to guard the church, hearing the shouts within, fancied that the English were offering violence to their duke; and they immediately assaulted the populace, and set fire to the neighbouring houses. The alarm was conveyed to the nobility who surrounded the prince; both English and Normans, full of apprehensions, rushed out to secure themselves from the present danger; and it was with difficulty that William himself was able to appease the tumult[m].

1067. Settlement of the government.

THE king, thus possessed of the throne by a pretended destination of king Edward, and by an irregular election of the people, but still more by force of arms, retired from London to Berking in Essex; and there received the submissions of all the nobility who had not attended his coronation. Edric, sirnamed the Forester, grand-nephew to that Edric so noted for his repeated acts of perfidy during the reigns of Ethelred and Edmond; earl Coxo, a man famous for bravery; even Edwin and Morcar, earls of Mercia and Northumberland; with the other principal noblemen of England, came and swore fealty to him; were received into favour, and were confirmed in the possession of their estates and dignities[n]. Every thing bore the appearance of peace and tranquillity; and William had no other occu-

[l] Malmesbury, p. 271. says, that he also promised to govern the Normans and English by equal laws; and this addition to the usual oath seems not improbable, considering the circumstances of the times.
[m] Gul. Pict. p. 206. Order. Vitalis, p. 503. [n] Gul. Pict. p. 208. Order. Vitalis, p. 506.

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pation than to give contentment to the foreigners who had aſſiſted him to mount the throne, and to his new ſubjects, who had ſo readily ſubmitted to him.

He had got poſſeſſion of the treaſure of Harold, which was conſiderable; and being alſo ſupplied with rich preſents from the opulent men in all parts of England, who were ſolicitous to gain the favour of their new ſovereign, he diſtributed great ſums among his troops, and by this liberality gave them hopes of obtaining at length thoſe more durable eſtabliſhments which they had expected from his enterpriſe [o]. The eccleſiaſtics, both at home and abroad, had much forwarded his ſucceſs, and he failed not, in return, to expreſs his gratitude and devotion in the manner which was moſt acceptable to them: He ſent Harold's ſtandard to the pope, accompanied with many valuable preſents: All the conſiderable monaſteries and churches in France, where prayers had been put up for his ſucceſs, now taſted of his bounty [p]: The Engliſh monks found him well diſpoſed to favour their order: And he built a new convent near Haſtings, which he called *Battle Abbey*, and which, on pretence of ſupporting monks to pray for his own ſoul, and for that of Harold, ſerved as a laſting memorial of his victory [q].

He introduced into England that ſtrict execution of juſtice for which his adminiſtration had been much celebrated in Normandy; and even during this violent revolution, every diſorder or oppreſſion met with rigorous puniſhment [r]. His army, in particular, was governed with ſevere diſcipline; and notwithſtanding the inſolence of victory, care was taken to give as little offence as poſſible to the jealouſy of

[o] Gul. Pict. p. 206. [p] Ibid. [q] Gul. Gemet. p. 288. Chron. Sax. p. 189. M. Weſt. p. 226. M. Paris, p. 9. Diceto, p. 482. This convent was freed by him from all epiſcopal juriſdiction. Monaſt. Ang. tom. i. p. 311, 312. [r] Gul. Pict p. 208. Order. Vital. p. 506.

the

CHAP. IV. 1067. the vanquished. The king appeared solicitous to unite, in an amicable manner, the Normans and the English, by intermarriages and alliances; and all his new subjects who approached his person were received with affability and regard. No signs of suspicion appeared, not even towards Edgar Atheling, the heir of the ancient royal family, whom William confirmed in the honours of earl of Oxford, conferred on him by Harold, and whom he affected to treat with the highest kindness, as nephew to the Confessor, his great friend and benefactor. Though he confiscated the estates of Harold, and of those who had fought in the battle of Hastings on the side of that prince, whom he represented as an usurper, he seemed willing to admit of every plausible excuse for past opposition to his pretensions, and he received many into favour who had carried arms against him. He confirmed the liberties and immunities of London and the other cities of England; and appeared desirous of replacing every thing on ancient establishments. In his whole administration he bore the semblance of the lawful prince, not of the conqueror; and the English began to flatter themselves that they had changed, not the form of their government, but the succession only of their sovereigns, a matter which gave them small concern. The better to reconcile his new subjects to his authority, William made a progress through some parts of England; and besides a splendid court and majestic presence, which overawed the people, already struck with his military fame, the appearance of his clemency and justice gained the approbation of the wise, attentive to the first steps of their new sovereign.

But amidst this confidence and friendship which he expressed for the English, the king took care to place all real power in the hands of his Normans, and still to keep possession of the sword, to which he was sensible he had owed his advancement to so-

vereign authority. He disarmed the city of London and other places, which appeared most warlike and populous; and building citadels in that capital, as well as in Winchester, Hereford, and the cities best situated for commanding the kingdom, he quartered Norman soldiers in all of them, and left no where any power able to resist or oppose him. He bestowed the forfeited estates on the most eminent of his captains, and established funds for the payment of his soldiers. And thus, while his civil administration carried the face of a legal magistrate, his military institutions were those of a master and tyrant; at least of one who reserved to himself, whenever he pleased, the power of assuming that character.

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King's return to Normandy.

By this mixture, however, of vigour and lenity, he had so soothed the minds of the English, that he thought he might safely revisit his native country, and enjoy the triumph and congratulation of his ancient subjects. He left the administration in the hands of his uterine brother, Odo bishop of Baieux, and of William Fitz Osberne. That their authority might be exposed to less danger, he carried over with him all the most considerable nobility of England, who, while they served to grace his court by their presence and magnificent retinues, were in reality hostages for the fidelity of the nation. Among these were Edgar Atheling, Stigand the primate, the earls Edwin and Morcar, Waltheof, the son of the brave earl Siward, with others, eminent for the greatness of their fortunes and families, or for their ecclesiastical and civil dignities. He was visited at the abbey of Fescamp, where he resided during some time, by Rodulph, uncle to the king of France, and by many powerful princes and nobles, who, having contributed to his enterprise, were desirous of participating in the joy and advantages of its success. His English courtiers, willing to ingratiate themselves with their new sovereign, out-

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vied

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vied each other in equipages and entertainments; and made a difplay of riches which ftruck the foreigners with aftonifhment. William of Poictiers, a Norman hiftorian [s], who was prefent, fpeaks with admiration of the beauty of their perfons, the fize and workmanfhip of their filver plate, the coftlinefs of their embroideries, an art in which the Englifh then excelled; and he expreffes himfelf in fuch terms, as tend much to exalt our idea of the opulence and cultivation of the people [t]. But though every thing bore the face of joy and feftivity, and William himfelf treated his new courtiers with great appearance of kindnefs, it was impoffible altogether to prevent the infolence of the Normans; and the Englifh nobles derived little fatisfaction from thofe entertainments, where they confidered themfelves as led in triumph by their oftentatious conqueror.

Difcontents of the Englifh.

In England affairs took ftill a worfe turn during the abfence of the fovereign. Difcontents and complaints multiplied every where; fecret confpiracies were entered into againft the government; hoftilities were already begun in many places; and every thing feemed to menace a revolution, as rapid as that which had placed William on the throne. The hiftorian above mentioned, who is a panegyrift of his mafter, throws the blame entirely on the fickle and mutinous difpofition of the Englifh, and highly celebrates the juftice and lenity of Odo's and Fitz Ofberne's adminiftration [u]. But other hiftorians, with more probability, impute the caufe chiefly to the Normans, who, defpifing a people that had fo eafily fubmitted to the yoke, envying their riches, and grudging the reftraints impofed

[s] P. 211, 212.

[t] As the hiftorian chiefly infifts on the filver plate, his panegyric on the Englifh magnificence fhows only how incompetent a judge he was of the matter. Silver was then of ten times the value, and was more than twenty times more rare than at prefent; and confequently, of all fpecies of luxury plate muft have been the rareft.

[u] P. 212.

upon

upon their own rapine, were deſirous of provoking them to a rebellion, by which they expected to acquire new confiſcations and forfeitures, and to gratify thoſe unbounded hopes which they had formed in entering on this enterpriſe [w].

It is evident, that the chief reaſon of this alteration in the ſentiments of the Engliſh, muſt be aſcribed to the departure of William, who was alone able to curb the violence of his captains, and to overawe the mutinies of the people. Nothing indeed appears more ſtrange, than that this prince, in leſs than three months after the conqueſt of a great, warlike, and turbulent nation, ſhould abſent himſelf, in order to reviſit his own country, which remained in profound tranquillity, and was not menaced by any of its neighbours; and ſhould ſo long leave his jealous ſubjects at the mercy of an inſolent and licentious army. Were we not aſſured of the ſolidity of his genius, and the good ſenſe diſplayed in all other circumſtances of his conduct, we might aſcribe this meaſure to a vain oſtentation, which rendered him impatient to diſplay his pomp and magnificence among his ancient ſubjects. It is therefore more natural to believe, that in ſo extraordinary a ſtep he was guided by a concealed policy; and that, though he had thought proper at firſt to allure the people to ſubmiſſion by the ſemblance of a legal adminiſtration, he found that he could neither ſatisfy his rapacious captains, nor ſecure his unſtable government, without farther exerting the rights of conqueſt, and ſeizing the poſſeſſions of the Engliſh. In order to have a pretext for this violence, he endeavoured, without diſcovering his intentions, to provoke and allure them into inſurrections, which he thought, could never prove dangerous, while he detained all the principal nobility in Normandy, while a great and victorious army

[w] Order. Vital. p. 507.

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was quartered in England, and while he himself was so near to suppress any tumult or rebellion. But as no ancient writer has ascribed this tyrannical purpose to William, it scarcely seems allowable, from conjecture alone, to throw such an imputation upon him.

Their insurrections.

But whether we are to account for that measure from the king's vanity or from his policy, it was the immediate cause of all the calamities which the English endured during this and the subsequent reigns, and gave rise to those mutual jealousies and animosities between them and the Normans, which were never appeased till a long tract of time had gradually united the two nations, and made them one people. The inhabitants of Kent, who had first submitted to the Conqueror, were the first that attempted to throw off the yoke; and in confederacy with Eustace, count of Bologne, who had also been disgusted by the Normans, they made an attempt, though without success, on the garrison of Dover [x]. Edric the Forester, whose possessions lay on the banks of the Severne, being provoked at the depredations of some Norman captains in his neighbourhood, formed an alliance with Blethyn and Rowallan, two Welsh princes; and endeavoured, with their assistance, to repel force by force [y]. But though these open hostilities were not very considerable, the disaffection was general among the English, who had become sensible, though too late, of their defenceless condition, and began already to experience those insults and injuries which a nation must always expect, that allows itself to be reduced to that abject situation. A secret conspiracy was entered into to perpetrate in one day a general massacre of the Normans, like that which had formerly been executed upon the Danes; and the quarrel was become

[x] Gul. Gemet. p. 289. Order. Vital. p. 508. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 245. [y] Hoveden, p. 450. M. West. p. 226. Sim. Dunelm. p. 197.

come so general and national, that the vassals of earl Coxo, having desired him to head them in an insurrection, and finding him resolute in maintaining his fidelity to William, put him to death as a traitor to his country. CHAP. IV. 1067.

THE king, informed of these dangerous discontents, hastened over to England; and by his presence, and the vigorous measures which he pursued, disconcerted all the schemes of the conspirators. Such of them as had been more violent in their mutiny, betrayed their guilt by flying, or concealing themselves; and the confiscation of their estates, while it increased the number of malcontents, both enabled William to gratify farther the rapacity of his Norman captains, and gave them the prospect of new forfeitures and attainders. The king began to regard all his English subjects as inveterate and irreclaimable enemies; and thenceforth either embraced, or was more fully confirmed in the resolution of seizing their possessions, and of reducing them to the most abject slavery. Though the natural violence and severity of his temper made him incapable of feeling any remorse in the execution of this tyrannical purpose, he had art enough to conceal his intention, and to preserve still some appearance of justice in his oppressions. He ordered all the English, who had been arbitrarily expelled by the Normans during his absence, to be restored to their estates [z]: But at the same time he imposed a general tax on the people, that of Danegelt, which had been abolished by the Confessor, and which had always been extremely odious to the nation [a]. Dec. 6.

As the vigilance of William overawed the malcontents, their insurrections were more the result of an impatient humour in the people, than of any 1068.

[z] Chron. Sax. p. 173. This fact is a full proof that the Normans had committed great injustice, and were the real cause of the insurrections of the English.

[a] Hoveden. p. 450. Sim. Dunelm. p. 197. Alur. Beverl. p. 127.

 regular

CHAP. IV. 1068. regular conſpiracy, which could give them a rational hope of ſucceſs againſt the eſtabliſhed power of the Normans. The inhabitants of Exeter, inſtigated by Githa, mother to king Harold, refuſed to admit a Norman garriſon, and betaking themſelves to arms, were ſtrengthened by the acceſſion of the neighbouring inhabitants of Devonſhire and Corwal[b]. The king haſtened with his forces to chaſtiſe this revolt; and on his approach, the wiſer and more conſiderable citizens, ſenſible of the unequal conteſt, perſuaded the people to ſubmit, and to deliver hoſtages for their obedience. A ſudden mutiny of the populace broke this agreement; and William, appearing before the walls, ordered the eyes of one of the hoſtages to be put out, as an earneſt of that ſeverity which the rebels muſt expect if they perſevered in their revolt[c]. The inhabitants were anew ſeized with terror, and ſurrendering at diſcretion, threw themſelves at the king's feet, and ſupplicated his clemency and forgiveneſs. William was not deſtitute of generoſity, when his temper was not hardened either by policy or paſſion: He was prevailed on to pardon the rebels, and he ſet guards on all the gates, in order to prevent the rapacity and inſolence of his ſoldiery[d]. Githa eſcaped with her treaſures to Flanders. The malcontents of Cornwal imitated the example of Exeter, and met with like treatment: And the king, having built a citadel in that city, which he put under the command of Baldwin, ſon of earl Gilbert, returned to Wincheſter, and diſperſed his army into their quarters. He was here joined by his wife Matilda, who had not before viſited England, and whom he now ordered to be crowned by archbiſhop Aldred. Soon after, ſhe brought him an acceſſion to his family by the birth of a fourth ſon, whom he named Henry. His three elder ſons, Robert, Richard, and William, ſtill reſided in Normandy.

[b] Order. Vital. p. 510. [c] Ibid. [d] Ibid.

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But though the king appeared thus fortunate, both in public and domeſtic life, the diſcontents of his Engliſh ſubjects augmented daily; and the injuries committed and ſuffered on both ſides, rendered the quarrel between them and the Normans abſolutely incurable. The inſolence of victorious maſters, diſperſed throughout the kingdom, ſeemed intolerable to the natives; and wherever they found the Normans, ſeparate or aſſembled in ſmall bodies, they ſecretly ſet upon them, and gratified their vengeance by the ſlaughter of their enemies. But an inſurrection in the north drew thither the general attention, and ſeemed to threaten more important conſequences. Edwin and Morcar appeared at the head of this rebellion; and theſe potent noblemen, before they took arms, ſtipulated for foreign ſuccours, from their nephew Blethyn prince of North Wales, from Malcolm king of Scotland, and from Sweyn king of Denmark. Beſides the general diſcontent which had ſeized the Engliſh, the two earls were incited to this revolt by private injuries. William, in order to inſure them to his intereſts, had, on his acceſſion, promiſed his daughter in marriage to Edwin; but either he had never ſeriouſly intended to perform this engagement, or, having changed his plan of adminiſtration in England from clemency to rigour, he thought it was to little purpoſe, if he gained one family, while he enraged the whole nation. When Edwin, therefore, renewed his applications, he gave him an abſolute denial [e]; and this diſappointment, added to ſo many other reaſons of diſguſt, induced that nobleman and his brother to concur with their incenſed countrymen, and to make one general effort for the recovery of their ancient liberties. William knew the importance of celerity in quelling an inſurrection, ſupported by ſuch powerful leaders,

[e] Order. Vital. p. 511.

and

CHAP. IV. 1068. and so agreeable to the wishes of the people; and having his troops always in readiness, he advanced by great journies to the north. On his march he gave orders to fortify the castle of Warwic, of which he left Henry de Beaumont governor, and that of Nottingham, which he committed to the custody of William Peverell, another Norman captain[f]. He reached York before the rebels were in any condition for resistance, or were joined by any of the foreign succours which they expected, except a small reinforcement from Wales[g]; and the two earls found no means of safety, but having recourse to the clemency of the victor. Archil, a potent nobleman in those parts, imitated their example, and delivered his son as a hostage for his fidelity[h]; nor were the people, thus deserted by their leaders, able to make any farther resistance. But the treatment which William gave the chiefs, was very different from that which fell to the share of their followers. He observed religiously the terms which he had granted to the former, and allowed them for the present to keep possession of their estates; but he extended the rigours of his confiscations over the latter, and gave away their lands to his foreign adventurers. These, planted throughout the whole country, and in possession of the military power, left Edwin and Morcar, whom he pretended to spare, destitute of all support, and ready to fall, whenever he should think proper to command their ruin. A peace which he made with Malcolm, who did him homage for Cumberland, seemed at the same time to deprive them of all prospect of foreign assistance[i].

Rigours of the Norman government. THE English were now sensible that their final destruction was intended; and that instead of a sovereign, whom they had hoped to gain by their submissions, they had tamely surrendered themselves, without resistance, to a tyrant and a con-

[f] Order. Vital. p. 511. [g] Ibid. [h] Ibid. [i] Ibid.

queror. Though the early confiscation of Harold's followers might seem iniquitous; being inflicted on men who had never sworn fealty to the duke of Normandy, who were ignorant of his pretensions, and who only fought in defence of the government which they themselves had established in their own country: Yet were these rigours, however contrary to the ancient Saxon laws, excused on account of the urgent necessities of the prince; and those who were not involved in the present ruin, hoped that they should thenceforth enjoy, without molestation, their possessions and their dignities. But the successive destruction of so many other families convinced them, that the king intended to rely entirely on the support and affections of foreigners; and they foresaw new forfeitures, attainders, and acts of violence, as the necessary result of this destructive plan of administration. They observed, that no Englishman possessed his confidence, or was entrusted with any command or authority; and that the strangers, whom a rigorous discipline could have but ill restrained, were encouraged in their insolence and tyranny against them. The easy submission of the kingdom on its first invasion had exposed the natives to contempt; the subsequent proofs of their animosity and resentment had made them the object of hatred; and they were now deprived of every expedient by which they could hope to make themselves either regarded or beloved by their sovereign. Impressed with the sense of this dismal situation, many Englishmen fled into foreign countries, with an intention of passing their lives abroad free from oppression, or of returning on a favourable opportunity to assist their friends in the recovery of their native liberties[k]. Edgar Atheling himself, dreading the insidious caresses of William, was persuaded by Cospatric, a powerful Northumbrian, to escape

[k] Order. Vital. p. 508. M. West. p. 225. M. Paris, p. 4. Sim Dun. p. 197.

CHAP. IV. 1068. with him into Scotland; and he carried thither his two ſiſters, Margaret and Chriſtina. They were well received by Malcolm, who ſoon after eſpouſed Margaret the eldeſt ſiſter; and partly with a view of ſtrengthening his kingdom by the acceſſion of ſo many ſtrangers, partly in hopes of employing them againſt the growing power of William, he gave great countenance to all the Engliſh exiles. Many of them ſettled there; and laid the foundation of families which afterwards made a figure in that country.

While the Engliſh ſuffered under theſe oppreſſions, even the foreigners were not much at their eaſe; but finding themſelves ſurrounded on all hands by enraged enemies, who took every advantage againſt them, and menaced them with ſtill more bloody effects of the public reſentment, they began to wiſh again for the tranquillity and ſecurity of their native country. Hugh de Grentmeſnil, and Humphry de Teliol, though entruſted with great commands, deſired to be diſmiſſed the ſervice; and ſome others imitated their example: A deſertion which was highly reſented by the king, and which he puniſhed by the confiſcation of all their poſſeſſions in England[k]. But William's bounty to his followers could not fail of alluring many new adventurers into his ſervice; and the rage of the vanquiſhed Engliſh ſerved only to excite the attention of the king and thoſe warlike chiefs, and keep them in readineſs to ſuppreſs every commencement of domeſtic rebellion or foreign invaſion.

1069. New inſurrections. It was not long before they found occupation for their proweſs and military conduct. Godwin, Edmond, and Magnus, three ſons of Harold, had, immediately after the defeat at Haſtings, ſought a retreat in Ireland; where, having met with a kind reception from Dermot and other princes of that

[k] Order. Vitalis, p. 512.

country,

country, they projected an invaſion on England, and they hoped that all the exiles from Denmark, Scotland, and Wales, aſſiſted by forces from theſe ſeveral countries, would at once commence hoſtilities, and rouſe the indignation of the Engliſh againſt their haughty conquerors. They landed in Devonſhire; but found Brian, ſon of the count of Britanny, at the head of ſome foreign troops, ready to oppoſe them; and being defeated in ſeveral actions, they were obliged to retreat to their ſhips, and to return with great loſs to Ireland [l]. The efforts of the Normans were now directed to the north, where affairs had fallen into the utmoſt confuſion. The more impatient of the Northumbrians had attacked Robert de Comyn, who was appointed governor of Durham; and gaining the advantage over him from his negligence, they put him to death in that city, with ſeven hundred of his followers [m]. This ſucceſs animated the inhabitants of York, who, riſing in arms, ſlew Robert Fitz-Richard their governor [n]; and beſieged in the caſtle William Mallet, on whom the command now devolved. A little after, the Daniſh troops landed from 300 veſſels: Oſberne, brother to king Sweyn, was entruſted with the command of theſe forces, and he was accompanied by Harold and Canute, two ſons of that monarch. Edgar Atheling appeared from Scotland, and brought along with him Coſpatrick, Waltheof, Siward, Bearne, Merleſwain, Adelin, and other leaders, who, partly from the hopes which they gave of Scottiſh ſuccours, partly from their authority in thoſe parts, eaſily perſuaded the warlike and diſcontented Northumbrians to join the inſurrection. Mallet, that he might better provide for the defence of the citadel of York, ſet fire to ſome houſes which

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[l] Gul. Gemet. p. 290. Order. Vital. p. 513. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 246. [m] Order. Vital. p. 512. Chron. de Mailr. p. 116. Hoveden, p. 450. M. Paris, p. 5. Sim. Dun. p. 198. [n] Order. Vital. p. 512.

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lay contiguous; but this expedient proved the immediate cause of his destruction. The flames, spreading into the neighbouring streets, reduced the whole city to ashes: The enraged inhabitants, aided by the Danes, took advantage of the confusion to attack the castle, which they carried by assault; and the garrison, to the number of 3000 men, was put to the sword without mercy [o].

THIS success proved a signal to many other parts of England, and gave the people an opportunity of showing their malevolence to the Normans. Hereward, a nobleman in East-Anglia, celebrated for valour, assembled his followers, and taking shelter in the Isle of Ely, made inroads on all the neighbouring country [p]. The English in the counties of Somerset and Dorset rose in arms, and assaulted Montacute the Norman governor; while the inhabitants of Cornwal and Devon invested Exeter, which from the memory of William's clemency still remained faithful to him. Edric the Forester, calling in the assistance of the Welsh, laid siege to Shrewsbury, and made head against earl Brient and Fitz-Osberne, who commanded in those quarters [q]. The English, every where repenting their former easy submission, seemed determined to make by concert one great effort for the recovery of their liberties, and for the expulsion of their oppressors.

WILLIAM, undismayed amidst this scene of confusion, assembled his forces, and animating them with the prospect of new confiscations and forfeitures, he marched against the rebels in the north, whom he regarded as the most formidable, and whose defeat he knew would strike a terror into all the other malcontents. Joining policy to force, he tried before his approach to weaken the enemy, by detaching the Danes from them; and he engaged Osberne, by large presents, and by offering him the liberty of

[o] Order. Vital. p. 513. Hoveden, p. 451.
[p] Ingulf, p. 71. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 47.
[q] Order. Vital. p. 514.

of plundering the ſea-coaſt, to retire, without committing farther hoſtilities, into Denmark [r]. Coſpatrick alſo, in deſpair of ſucceſs, made his peace with the king, and paying a ſum of money as an atonement for his inſurrection, was received into favour, and even inveſted with the earldom of Northumberland. Waltheof, who long defended York with great courage, was allured with this appearance of clemency; and as William knew how to eſteem valour even in an enemy, that nobleman had no reaſon to repent of this confidence [s]. Even Edric, compelled by neceſſity, ſubmitted to the Conqueror, and received forgiveneſs, which was ſoon after followed by ſome degree of truſt and favour. Malcolm, coming too late to ſupport his confederates, was conſtrained to retire; and all the Engliſh rebels in other parts, except Hereward, who ſtill kept in his faſtneſſes, diſperſed themſelves, and left the Normans undiſputed maſters of the kingdom. Edgar Atheling, with his followers, ſought again a retreat in Scotland from the purſuit of his enemies.

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1070. New rigours of the government.

BUT the ſeeming clemency of William towards the Engliſh leaders proceeded only from artifice, or from his eſteem of individuals: His heart was hardened againſt all compaſſion towards the people; and he ſcrupled no meaſure, however violent or ſevere, which ſeemed requiſite to ſupport his plan of tyrannical adminiſtration. Senſible of the reſtleſs diſpoſition of the Northumbrians, he determined to incapacitate them ever after from giving diſturbance, and he iſſued orders for laying entirely waſte that fertile country, which for the extent of ſixty miles lies between the Humber and the Tees [t]. The

[r] Hoveden, p. 451. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 47. Sim. Dun. p. 199. [s] Malmeſ. p. 104. H. Hunt. p. 369. [t] Chron. Sax. p. 174. Ingulf, p. 79. Malmeſ. p. 103. Hoveden, p. 451. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 47. M. Paris, p. 5. Sim. Dun. p. 199. Brompton, p. 966. Knyghton, p. 2344. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 702.

houſes

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houses were reduced to ashes by the merciless Normans; the cattle seized and driven away; the instruments of husbandry destroyed; and the inhabitants compelled either to seek for a subsistence in the southern parts of Scotland, or if they lingered in England, from a reluctance to abandon their ancient habitations, they perished miserably in the woods from cold and hunger. The lives of a hundred thousand persons are computed to have been sacrificed to this stroke of barbarous policy [u], which, by seeking a remedy for a temporary evil, thus inflicted a lasting wound on the power and populousness of the nation.

But William, finding himself entirely master of a people who had given him such sensible proofs of their impotent rage and animosity, now resolved to proceed to extremities against all the natives of England, and to reduce them to a condition in which they should no longer be formidable to his government. The insurrections and conspiracies in so many parts of the kingdom, had involved the bulk of the landed proprietors, more or less, in the guilt of treason; and the king took advantage of executing against them, with the utmost rigour, the laws of forfeiture and attainder. Their lives were indeed commonly spared; but their estates were confiscated, and either annexed to the royal demesnes, or conferred with the most profuse bounty on the Normans and other foreigners [w]. While the king's declared intention was to depress, or rather entirely extirpate, the English gentry [x], it is easy to believe that scarcely the form of justice would be observed in these violent proceedings *; and that any suspicions served as the most undoubted proofs of guilt against a people thus devoted to destruction. It was crime sufficient in an Englishman to be opulent, or noble, or powerful; and the policy

[u] Order. Vital. p. 515. [w] Malmes. p. 104. [x] H. Hunt, p. 370. * See note [H] at the end of the volume.

of

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of the king, concurring with the rapacity of foreign adventurers, produced almost a total revolution in the landed property of the kingdom. Ancient and honourable families were reduced to beggary; the nobles themselves were every where treated with ignominy and contempt; they had the mortification of seeing their castles and manors possessed by Normans of the meanest birth and lowest stations [y]; and they found themselves carefully excluded from every road which led either to riches or preferment*.

Introduction of the feudal law.

As power naturally follows property, this revolution alone gave great security to the foreigners; but William, by the new institutions which he established, took also care to retain for ever the military authority in those hands which had enabled him to subdue the kingdom. He introduced into England the feudal law, which he found established in France and Normandy, and which, during that age, was the foundation both of the stability and of the disorders in most of the monarchical governments of Europe. He divided all the lands of England, with very few exceptions, besides the royal demesnes, into baronies; and he conferred these, with the reservation of stated services and payments, on the most considerable of his adventurers. These great barons, who held immediately of the crown, shared out a great part of their lands to other foreigners, who were denominated knights or vassals, and who paid their lord the same duty and submission in peace and war, which he himself owed to his sovereign. The whole kingdom contained about 700 chief tenants, and 60,215 knights-fees [z]; and as none of the native English were admitted into the first rank, the few who retained their landed pro-

[y] Order. Vitalis, p. 521. M. West. p. 229. * See note [I] at the end of the volume. [z] Order. Vitalis, p. 523. Secretum Abbatis, apud Selden, Titles of Honour, p. 573. Spelm. Gloss. in verbo *Feodum*. Sir Robert Cotton.

perty

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perty were glad to be received into the second, and under the protection of some powerful Norman, to load themselves and their posterity with this grievous burthen, for estates which they had received free from their ancestors [a]. The small mixture of English which entered into this civil or military fabric (for it partook of both species), was so restrained by subordination under the foreigners, that the Norman dominion seemed now to be fixed on the most durable basis, and to defy all the efforts of its enemi s.

The better to unite the parts of the government, and to bind them into one system, which might serve both for defence against foreigners, and for the support of domestic tranquillity, William reduced the ecclesiastical revenues under the same feudal law; and though he had courted the church on his invasion and accession, he now subjected it to services which the clergy regarded as a grievous slavery, and as totally unbefitting their profession. The bishops and abbots were obliged, when required, to furnish to the king, during war, a number of knights or military tenants, proportioned to the extent of property possessed by each see or abbey; and they were liable, in case of failure, to the same penalties which were exacted from the laity [b]. The pope and the ecclesiastics exclaimed against this tyranny, as they called it; but the king's authority was so well established over the army, who held every thing from his bounty, that superstition itself, even in that age, when it was most prevalent, was constrained to bend under his superior influence.

But as the great body of the clergy were still natives, the king had much reason to dread the effects of their resentment: He therefore used the precaution of expelling the English from all the consider-

[a] M. West. p. 225. M. Paris, p. 4. Bracton, lib. 1. cap. 11. num. 1. Fleta, lib. 1. cap. 8. n. 2.

[b] M. Paris, p. 5. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 248.

able

able dignities, and of advancing foreigners in their place. The partiality of the Confessor towards the Normans had been so great, that, aided by their superior learning, it had promoted them to many of the sees in England; and even before the period of the conquest, scarcely more than six or seven of the prelates were natives of the country. But among these was Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury; a man who, by his address and vigour, by the greatness of his family and alliances, by the extent of his possessions, as well as by the dignity of his office, and his authority among the English, gave jealousy to the king [c]. Though William had on his accession affronted this prelate, by employing the archbishop of York to officiate at his consecration, he was careful on other occasions to load him with honours and caresses, and to avoid giving him farther offence till the opportunity should offer of effecting his final destruction [d]. The suppression of the late rebellions, and the total subjection of the English, made him hope that an attempt against Stigand, however violent, would be covered by his great successes, and be overlooked amidst the other important revolutions which affected so deeply the property and liberty of the kingdom. Yet, notwithstanding these great advantages, he did not think it safe to violate the reverence usually paid to the primate; but under cover of a new superstition, which he was the great instrument of introducing into England.

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Innovation in ecclesiastical government.

THE doctrine which exalted the papacy above all human power, had gradually diffused itself from the city and court of Rome; and was, during that age, much more prevalent in the southern than in the northern kingdoms of Europe. Pope Alexander, who had assisted William in his conquests, naturally expected that the French and Normans would import into England the same reverence for his sa-

c Parker, p. 161. d Ibid. p. 164.

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cred character with which they were impressed in their own country; and would break the spiritual as well as civil independency of the Saxons, who had hitherto conducted their ecclesiastical government with an acknowledgment indeed of primacy in the see of Rome, but without much idea of its title to dominion or authority. As soon, therefore, as the Norman prince seemed fully established on the throne, the pope dispatched Ermenfroy, bishop of Sion, as his legate into England; and this prelate was the first that had ever appeared with that character in any part of the British islands. The king, though he was probably led by principle to pay this submission to Rome, determined, as is usual, to employ the incident as a means of serving his political purposes, and of degrading those English prelates who were become obnoxious to him. The legate submitted to become the instrument of his tyranny; and thought that the more violent the exertion of power, the more certainly did it confirm the authority of that court from which he derived his commission. He summoned, therefore, a council of the prelates and abbots at Winchester; and being assisted by two cardinals, Peter and John, he cited before him Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, to answer for his conduct. The primate was accused of three crimes; the holding of the see of Winchester, together with that of Canterbury; the officiating in the pall of Robert his predecessor; and the having received his own pall from Benedict IX. who was afterwards deposed for simony, and for intrusion into the papacy [e]. These crimes of Stigand were mere pretences; since the first had been a practice not unusual in England, and was never any where subjected to a higher penalty than a resignation of one of the sees; the second was a pure ceremonial; and as Benedict was the only pope who

[e] Hoveden, p. 453. Diceto, p. 482. Knyghton, p. 2345. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 5, 6. Ypod. Neust. p. 438.

then

then officiated, and his acts were never repealed, all the prelates of the church, especially those who lay at a distance, were excusable for making their applications to him. Stigand's ruin, however, was resolved on, and was prosecuted with great severity. The legate degraded him from his dignity: The king confiscated his estate, and cast him into prison, where he continued in poverty and want during the remainder of his life. Like rigour was exercised against the other English prelates: Agelric, bishop of Selesey, and Agelmare of Elmham, were deposed by the legate, and imprisoned by the king. Many considerable abbots shared the same fate: Egelwin, bishop of Durham, fled the kingdom: Wulstan of Worcester, a man of an inoffensive character, was the only English prelate that escaped this general proscription [f], and remained in possession of his dignity. Aldred, archbishop of York, who had set the crown on William's head, had died a little before of grief and vexation, and had left his malediction to that prince, on account of the breach of his coronation oath, and of the extreme tyranny with which he saw he was determined to treat his English subjects [g].

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It was a fixed maxim in this reign, as well as in some of the subsequent, that no native of the island should ever be advanced to any dignity, ecclesiastical, civil, or military [h]. The king, therefore, upon Stigand's deposition, promoted Lanfranc, a Milanese monk, celebrated for his learning and piety, to the vacant see. This prelate was rigid in defending the prerogatives of his station; and after a long pro-

[f] Brompton relates, that Wulstan was also deprived by the synod; but refusing to deliver his pastoral staff and ring to any but the person from whom he first received it, he went immediately to king Edward's tomb, and struck the staff so deeply into the stone, that none but himself was able to pull it out: Upon which he was allowed to keep his bishopric. This instance may serve, instead of many, as a specimen of the monkish miracles. See also the Annals of Burton, p. 284.

[g] Malmes. de Gest. Pont. p. 154. [h] Ingulf. p. 70, 71.

 cess

CHAP. IV. 1070. cess before the pope, he obliged Thomas, a Norman monk, who had been appointed to the see of York, to acknowledge the primacy of the archbishop of Canterbury. Where ambition can be so happy as to cover its enterprises, even to the person himself, under the appearance of principle, it is the most incurable and inflexible of all human passions. Hence Lanfranc's zeal in promoting the interests of the papacy, by which he himself augmented his own authority, was indefatigable; and met with proportionable success. The devoted attachment to Rome continually increased in England; and being favoured by the sentiments of the conquerors, as well as by the monastic establishments formerly introduced by Edred and by Edgar, it soon reached the same height at which it had, during some time, stood in France and Italy[i]. It afterwards went much farther; being favoured by that very remote situation which had at first obstructed its progress; and being less checked by knowledge and a liberal education, which were still somewhat more common in the southern countries.

The prevalence of this superstitious spirit became dangerous to some of William's successors, and incommodious to most of them: But the arbitrary sway of this king over the English, and his extensive authority over the foreigners, kept him from feeling any immediate inconveniencies from it. He retained the church in great subjection, as well as his lay subjects; and would allow none, of whatever character, to dispute his sovereign will and pleasure. He prohibited his subjects from acknowledging any one for pope whom he himself had not previously received: He required that all the ecclesiastical canons, voted in any synod, should first be laid before him, and be ratified by his authority:

[i] M. West. p. 228. Lanfranc wrote in defence of the real presence against Berengarius; and in those ages of stupidity and ignorance, he was greatly applauded for that performance.

Even

Even bulls or letters from Rome could not legally be produced, till they received the ſame ſanction: And none of his miniſters or barons, whatever offences they were guilty of, could be ſubjected to ſpiritual cenſures till he himſelf had given his conſent to their excommunication[k]. Theſe regulations were worthy of a ſovereign, and kept united the civil and eccleſiaſtical powers, which the principles introduced by this prince himſelf had an immediate tendency to ſeparate.

But the Engliſh had the cruel mortification to find that their king's authority, however acquired or however extended, was all employed in their oppreſſion; and that the ſcheme of their ſubjection, attended with every circumſtance of inſult and indignity[l], was deliberately formed by the prince, and wantonly proſecuted by his followers[m]. William had even entertained the difficult project of totally aboliſhing the Engliſh language; and for that purpoſe, he ordered that in all ſchools throughout the kingdom the youth ſhould be inſtructed in the French tongue; a practice which was continued from cuſtom till after the reign of Edward III. and was never indeed totally diſcontinued in England. The pleadings in the ſupreme courts of judicature were in French[n]: The deeds were often drawn in the ſame language: The laws were compoſed in that idiom[o]: No other tongue was uſed at court: It became the language of all faſhionable company; and the Engliſh themſelves, aſhamed of their own country, affected to excel in that foreign dialect. From this attention of William, and from the extenſive foreign dominions long annexed to the crown of England, proceeded that mixture of French which is at preſent to be found in the Engliſh tongue,

[k] Eadmer, p. 6. [l] Order. Vital. p. 523. H. Hunt. p. 370. [m] Ingulf, p. 71. [n] 36 Ed. III. cap. 15. Selden Spicileg. ad Eadmer. p. 189. Forteſcue de laud. leg. Angl. cap. 48. [o] Chron. Rothom. A. D. 1066.

CHAP. IV. 1070. and which composes the greatest and best part of our language. But amidst those endeavours to depress the English nation, the king, moved by the remonstrances of some of his prelates, and by the earnest desires of the people, restored a few of the laws of king Edward[p]; which, though seemingly of no great importance towards the protection of general liberty, gave them extreme satisfaction, as a memorial of their ancient government, and an unusual mark of complaisance in their imperious conquerors *.

1071. THE situation of the two great earls, Morcar and Edwin, became now very disagreeable. Though they had retained their allegiance during this general insurrection of their countrymen, they had not gained the king's confidence, and they found themselves exposed to the malignity of the courtiers, who envied them on account of their opulence and greatness, and at the same time involved them in that general contempt which they entertained for the English. Sensible that they had entirely lost their dignity, and could not even hope to remain long in safety; they determined, though too late, to share the same fate with their countrymen. While Edwin retired to his estate in the north, with a view of commencing an insurrection, Morcar took shelter in the Isle of Ely with the brave Hereward, who, secured by the inaccessible situation of the place, still defended himself against the Normans. But this attempt served only to accelerate the ruin of the few English, who had hitherto been able to preserve their rank or fortune during the past convulsions. William employed all his endeavours to subdue the Isle of Ely; and having surrounded it with flat-bottomed boats, and made a causeway through the morasses to the extent of two miles, he obliged the rebels to surrender at discretion. Hereward alone

[p] Ingulf, p. 88. Brompton, p. 982. Knyghton. p 2355. Hovedon, p. 600. * See note [K] at the end of the volume.

forced

forced his way, ſword in hand, through the enemy; and ſtill continued his hoſtilities by ſea againſt the Normans, till at laſt William, charmed with his bravery, received him into favour, and reſtored him to his eſtate. Earl Morcar, and Egelwin biſhop of Durham, who had joined the malcontents, were thrown into priſon, and the latter ſoon after died in confinement. Edwin, attempting to make his eſcape into Scotland, was betrayed by ſome of his followers, and was killed by a party of Normans, to the great affliction of the Engliſh, and even to that of William, who paid a tribute of generous tears to the memory of this gallant and beautiful youth. The king of Scotland, in hopes of profiting by theſe convulſions, had fallen upon the northern counties; but on the approach of William he retired; and when the king entered his country, he was glad to make peace, and to pay the uſual homage to the Engliſh crown. To complete the king's proſperity, Edgar Atheling himſelf, deſpairing of ſucceſs, and weary of a fugitive life, ſubmitted to his enemy; and receiving a decent penſion for his ſubſiſtence, was permitted to live in England unmoleſted. But theſe acts of generoſity towards the leaders were diſgraced, as uſual, by William's rigour againſt the inferior malcontents. He ordered the hands to be lopt off, and the eyes to be put out, of many of the priſoners whom he had taken in the Iſle of Ely; and he diſperſed them in that miſerable condition throughout the country, as monuments of his ſeverity.

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The province of Maine in France had, by the will of Herbert the laſt count, fallen under the dominion of William ſome years before his conqueſt of England; but the inhabitants, diſſatisfied with the Norman government, and inſtigated by Fulk count of Anjou, who had ſome pretenſions to the ſucceſſion, now roſe in rebellion, and expelled the magiſtrates whom the king had placed over them. The 1073.

CHAP. IV. 1073. full settlement of England afforded him leisure to punish this insult on his authority; but being unwilling to remove his Norman forces from this island, he carried over a considerable army, composed almost entirely of English; and joining them to some troops levied in Normandy, he entered the revolted province. The English appeared ambitious of distinguishing themselves on this occasion, and of retrieving that character of valour which had long been national among them; but which their late easy subjection under the Normans had somewhat degraded and obscured. Perhaps too they hoped that, by their zeal and activity, they might recover the confidence of their sovereign, as their ancestors had formerly, by like means, gained the affections of Canute; and might conquer his inveterate prejudices in favour of his own countrymen. The king's military conduct, seconded by these brave troops, soon overcame all opposition in Maine: The inhabitants were obliged to submit, and the count of Anjou relinquished his pretensions.

1074. Insurrection of the Norman barons.

But during these transactions the government of England was greatly disturbed; and that too by those very foreigners who owed every thing to the king's bounty, and who were the sole object of his friendship and regard. The Norman barons, who had engaged with their duke in the conquest of England, were men of the most independent spirit; and though they obeyed their leader in the field, they would have regarded with disdain the richest acquisitions, had they been required in return to submit, in their civil government, to the arbitrary will of one man. But the imperious character of William, encouraged by his absolute dominion over the English, and often impelled by the necessity of his affairs, had prompted him to stretch his authority over the Normans themselves beyond what the free genius of that victorious people could easily bear. The discontents were become general among those

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those haughty nobles; and even Roger, earl of Hereford, son and heir of Fitz-Osberne, the king's chief favourite, was strongly infected with them. This nobleman, intending to marry his sister to Ralph de Guader, earl of Norfolk, had thought it his duty to inform the king of his purpose, and to desire the royal consent; but meeting with a refusal, he proceeded nevertheless to complete the nuptials, and assembled all his friends, and those of Guader, to attend the solemnity. The two earls, disgusted by the denial of their request, and dreading William's resentment for their disobedience, here prepared measures for a revolt; and during the gaiety of the festival, while the company was heated with wine, they opened the design to their guests. They inveighed against the arbitrary conduct of the king; his tyranny over the English, whom they affected on this occasion to commiserate; his imperious behaviour to his barons of the noblest birth; and his apparent intention of reducing the victors and the vanquished to a like ignominious servitude. Amidst their complaints, the indignity of submitting to a bastard [q] was not forgotten; the certain prospect of success in a revolt, by the assistance of the Danes and the discontented English, was insisted on; and the whole company, inflamed with the same sentiments, and warmed by the jollity of the entertainment, entered, by a solemn engagement, into the design of shaking off the royal authority. Even earl Waltheof, who was present, inconsiderately expressed his approbation of the conspiracy, and promised his concurrence towards its success.

This nobleman, the last of the English who, for some generations, possessed any power or authority, had, after his capitulation at York, been

[q] William was so little ashamed of his birth, that he assumed the appellation of Bastard in some of his letters and charters. Spelm. Gloss. in verb. *Bastardus*. Camden in *Richmondshire*.

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received into favour by the Conqueror; had even married Judith, niece to that prince; and had been promoted to the earldoms of Huntingdon and Northampton [q]. Cospatrick, earl of Northumberland, having, on some new disgust from William, retired into Scotland, where he received the earldom of Dunbar from the bounty of Malcolm; Waltheof was appointed his successor in that important command, and seemed still to possess the confidence and friendship of his sovereign [r]. But as he was a man of generous principles, and loved his country, it is probable that the tyranny exercised over the English lay heavy upon his mind, and destroyed all the satisfaction which he could reap from his own grandeur and advancement. When a prospect, therefore, was opened of retrieving their liberty, he hastily embraced it; while the fumes of the liquor, and the ardour of the company, prevented him from reflecting on the consequences of that rash attempt. But after his cool judgment returned, he foresaw, that the conspiracy of those discontented barons was not likely to prove successful against the established power of William; or if it did, that the slavery of the English, instead of being alleviated by that event, would become more grievous under a multitude of foreign leaders, factious and ambitious, whose union and whose discord would be equally oppressive to the people. Tormented with these reflections, he opened his mind to his wife Judith, of whose fidelity he entertained no suspicion, but who, having secretly fixed her affections on another, took this opportunity of ruining her easy and credulous husband. She conveyed intelligence of the conspiracy to the king, and aggravated every circumstance, which, she believed, would tend to incense him against Waltheof, and render him absolutely implacable [s].

[q] Order. Vital. p. 522. Hoveden, p. 454. [r] Sim. Dun. p. 205.
[s] Order. Vital. p. 536.

Meanwhile

Meanwhile the earl, ſtill dubious with regard to the part which he ſhould act, diſcovered the ſecret in confeſſion to Lanfranc, on whoſe probity and judgment he had a great reliance: He was perſuaded by the prelate, that he owed no fidelity to thoſe rebellious barons, who had by ſurpriſe gained his conſent to a crime; that his firſt duty was to his ſovereign and benefactor; his next to himſelf and his family; and that, if he ſeized not the opportunity of making atonement for his guilt by revealing it, the temerity of the conſpirators was ſo great, that they would give ſome other perſon the means of acquiring the merit of the diſcovery. Waltheof, convinced by theſe arguments, went over to Normandy; but though he was well received by the king, and thanked for his fidelity, the account, previouſly tranſmitted by Judith, had ſunk deep into William's mind, and had deſtroyed all the merit of her huſband's repentance.

THE conſpirators, hearing of Waltheof's departure, immediately concluded their deſign to be betrayed; and they flew to arms before their ſchemes were ripe for execution, and before the arrival of the Danes, in whoſe aid they placed their chief confidence. The earl of Hereford was checked by Walter de Lacy, a great baron in thoſe parts, who, ſupported by the biſhop of Worceſter and the abbot of Eveſham, raiſed ſome forces, and prevented the earl from paſſing the Severne, or advancing into the heart of the kingdom. The earl of Norfolk was defeated at Fagadun, near Cambridge, by Odo, the regent, aſſiſted by Richard de Bienfaite and William de Warrenne, the two juſticiaries. The priſoners taken in this action had their right foot cut off, as a puniſhment of their treaſon: The earl himſelf eſcaped to Norwich, thence to Denmark; where the Daniſh fleet, which had made an unſucceſsful attempt upon the coaſt of England,

CHAP. IV. 1074. England[t], soon after arrived, and brought him intelligence, that all his confederates were suppressed, and were either killed, banished, or taken prisoners[u]. Ralph retired in despair to Britanny, where he possessed a large estate and extensive jurisdictions.

The king, who hastened over to England in order to suppress the insurrection, found that nothing remained but the punishment of the criminals, which he executed with great severity. Many of the rebels were hanged; some had their eyes put out; others their hands cut off. But William, agreeably to his usual maxims, showed more lenity to their leader, the earl of Hereford, who was only condemned to a forfeiture of his estate, and to imprisonment during pleasure. The king seemed even disposed to remit this last part of the punishment; had not Roger, by a fresh insolence, provoked him to render his confinement perpetual. But Waltheof, being an Englishman, was not
1075. treated with so much humanity; though his guilt, always much inferior to that of the other conspirators, was atoned for by an early repentance and return to his duty. William, instigated by his niece, as well as by his rapacious courtiers, who longed for so rich a forfeiture, ordered him to be tried,
29th Apr. condemned, and executed. The English, who considered this nobleman as the last resource of their nation, grievously lamented his fate, and fancied that miracles were wrought by his reliques, as a testimony of his innocence and sanctity. The infamous Judith, falling soon after under the king's displeasure, was abandoned by all the world, and passed the rest of her life in contempt, remorse, and misery.

[t] Chron. Sax. p. 183. M. Paris, p. 7.

[u] Many of the fugitive Normans are supposed to have fled into Scotland; where they were protected, as well as the fugitive English, by Malcolm. Whence come the many French and Norman families, which are found at present in that country.

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NOTHING remained to complete William's ſatiſfaction but the puniſhment of Ralph de Guader; and he haſtened over to Normandy, in order to gratify his vengeance on that criminal. But though the conteſt ſeemed very unequal between a private nobleman and the king of England, Ralph was ſo well ſupported both by the earl of Britanny and the king of France, that William, after beſieging him for ſome time in Dol, was obliged to abandon the enterpriſe, and make with thoſe powerful princes a peace, in which Ralph himſelf was included. England, during his abſence, remained in tranquillity; and nothing remarkable occurred, except two eccleſiaſtical ſynods which were ſummoned, one at London, another at Wincheſter. In the former, the precedency among the epiſcopal ſees was ſettled, and the ſeat of ſome of them was removed from ſmall villages to the moſt conſiderable town within the dioceſe. In the ſecond was tranſacted a buſineſs of more importance.

1076. Diſpute about inveſtitures.

THE induſtry and perſeverance are ſurpriſing, with which the popes had been treaſuring up powers and pretenſions during ſo many ages of ignorance; while each pontiff employed every fraud for advancing purpoſes of imaginary piety, and cheriſhed all claims which might turn to the advantage of his ſucceſſors, though he himſelf could not expect ever to reap any benefit from them. All this immenſe ſtore of ſpiritual and civil authority was now devolved on Gregory VII. of the name of Hildebrand, the moſt enterpriſing pontiff that had ever filled that chair, and the leaſt reſtrained by fear, decency, or moderation. Not content with ſhaking off the yoke of the emperors, who had hitherto exerciſed the power of appointing the pope on every vacancy, at leaſt of ratifying his election; he undertook the arduous taſk of entirely disjoining the eccleſiaſtical from the civil power, and of excluding profane laymen from the right which they had

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had assumed, of filling the vacancies of bishoprics, abbies, and other spiritual dignities[w]. The sovereigns, who had long exercised this power, and who had acquired it, not by encroachments on the church, but on the people, to whom it originally belonged[x], made great opposition to this claim of the court of Rome; and Henry IV. the reigning emperor, defended this prerogative of his crown with a vigour and resolution suitable to its importance. The few offices, either civil or military, which the feudal institutions left the sovereign the power of bestowing, made the prerogative of conferring the pastoral ring and staff the most valuable jewel of the royal diadem; especially as the general ignorance of the age bestowed a consequence on the ecclesiastical offices, even beyond the great extent of power and property which belonged to them. Superstition, the child of ignorance, invested the clergy with an authority almost sacred; and as they ingrossed the little learning of the age, their interposition became requisite in all civil business, and a real usefulness in common life was thus superadded to the spiritual sanctity of their character.

When the usurpations, therefore, of the church had come to such maturity as to embolden her to attempt extorting the right of investitures from the temporal power, Europe, especially Italy and Germany, was thrown into the most violent convulsions, and the pope and the emperor waged implacable war on each other. Gregory dared to fulminate the sentence of excommunication against Henry and his adherents, to pronounce him rightfully deposed, to free his subjects from their oaths of allegiance; and instead of shocking mankind by this gross encroachment on the civil authority, he found the stupid people ready to second his most exorbitant pretensions.

[w] L'Abbé Conc. tom. x. p. 371, 372. com. 2.
[x] Padre Paolo sopra benef. ecclef. p. 30.

Every

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Every minister, servant, or vassal of the emperor, who received any disgust, covered his rebellion under the pretence of principle; and even the mother of this monarch, forgetting all the ties of nature, was seduced to countenance the insolence of his enemies. Princes themselves, not attentive to the pernicious consequences of those papal claims, employed them for their present purposes: And the controversy, spreading into every city of Italy, engendered the parties of Guelf and Ghibbelin; the most durable and most inveterate factions that ever arose from the mixture of ambition and religious zeal. Besides numberless assassinations, tumults, and convulsions, to which they gave rise, it is computed that the quarrel occasioned no less than sixty battles in the reign of Henry IV. and eighteen in that of his successor, Henry V. when the claims of the sovereign pontiff finally prevailed [y].

But the bold spirit of Gregory, not dismayed with the vigorous opposition which he met with from the emperor, extended his usurpations all over Europe; and well knowing the nature of mankind, whose blind astonishment ever inclines them to yield to the most impudent pretensions, he seemed determined to set no bounds to the spiritual, or rather temporal monarchy, which he had undertaken to erect. He pronounced the sentence of excommunication against Nicephorus, emperor of the East; Robert Guiscard, the adventurous Norman who had acquired the dominion of Naples, was attacked by the same dangerous weapon: He degraded Boleslas, king of Poland, from the rank of king; and even deprived Poland of the title of a kingdom: He attempted to treat Philip king of France with the same rigour which he had employed against the emperor [z]: He pretended to the entire property and dominion of Spain; and he parcelled

y Padre Paolo sopra benef. eccles. p. 113.

z Epist. Greg. VII. epist. 32. 35. lib. 2. epist. 5.

it

CHAP. IV. 1076. it out amongst adventurers, who undertook to conquer it from the Saracens, and to hold it in vassalage under the see of Rome[a]: Even the Christian bishops, on whose aid he relied for subduing the temporal princes, saw that he was determined to reduce them to servitude; and by assuming the whole legislative and judicial power of the church, to centre all authority in the sovereign pontiff[b].

WILLIAM the Conqueror, the most potent, the most haughty, and the most vigorous prince in Europe, was not, amidst all his splendid successes, secure from the attacks of this enterprising pontiff. Gregory wrote him a letter, requiring him to fulfil his promise in doing homage for the kingdom of England to the see of Rome, and to send him over that tribute, which all his predecessors had been accustomed to pay to the vicar of Christ. By the tribute, he meant Peter's pence; which, though at first a charitable donation of the Saxon princes, was interpreted, according to the usual practice of the Romish court, to be a badge of subjection acknowledged by the kingdom. William replied, that the money should be remitted as usual; but that neither had he promised to do homage to Rome, nor was it in the least his purpose to impose that servitude on his state[c]. And the better to show Gregory his independence, he ventured, notwithstanding the frequent complaints of the pope, to refuse to the English bishops the liberty of attending a general council which that pontiff had summoned against his enemies.

BUT though the king displayed this vigour in supporting the royal dignity, he was infected with the general superstition of the age, and he did not perceive the ambitious scope of those institutions, which, under colour of strictness in religion, were introduced or promoted by the court of Rome.

[a] Epist. Greg. VII. lib. 1. epist. 7. [b] Greg. Epist. lib. 2. epist. 55. [c] Spicileg. Seldeni ad Eadmer. p. 4.

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Gregory, while he was throwing all Europe into combuſtion by his violence and impoſtures, affected an anxious care for the purity of manners; and even the chaſte pleaſures of the marriage-bed were inconſiſtent, in his opinion, with the ſanctity of the ſacerdotal character. He had iſſued a decree prohibiting the marriage of prieſts, excommunicating all clergymen who retained their wives, declaring ſuch unlawful commerce to be fornication, and rendering it criminal in the laity to attend divine worſhip, when ſuch profane prieſts officiated at the altar [d]. This point was a great object in the politics of the Roman pontiffs; and it coſt them infinitely more pains to eſtabliſh it, than the propagation of any ſpeculative abſurdity which they had ever attempted to introduce. Many ſynods were ſummoned in different parts of Europe, before it was finally ſettled; and it was there conſtantly remarked, that the younger clergymen complied cheerfully with the pope's decrees in this particular, and that the chief reluctance appeared in thoſe who were more advanced in years: An event ſo little conſonant to men's natural expectations, that it could not fail to be gloſſed on, even in that blind and ſuperſtitious age. William allowed the pope's legate to aſſemble, in his abſence, a ſynod at Wincheſter, in order to eſtabliſh the celibacy of the clergy; but the church of England could not yet be carried the whole length expected. The ſynod was content with decreeing, that the biſhops ſhould not thenceforth ordain any prieſts or deacons without exacting from them a promiſe of celibacy; but they enacted, that none, except thoſe who belonged to collegiate or cathedral churches, ſhould be obliged to ſeparate from their wives.

Revolt of prince Robert.

The king paſſed ſome years in Normandy; but his long reſidence there was not entirely owing to

[d] Hoveden, p. 455. 457. Flor. Wigorn. p. 638. Spelm. Concil. fol. 13. A. D. 1076.

his

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his declared preference of that dutchy: His presence was alſo neceſſary for compoſing thoſe diſturbances which had ariſen in that favourite territory, and which had even originally proceeded from his own family. Robert, his eldeſt ſon, ſurnamed Gambaron or Courthoſe, from his ſhort legs, was a prince who inherited all the bravery of his family and nation; but without that policy and diſſimulation, by which his father was ſo much diſtinguiſhed, and which, no leſs than his military valour, had contributed to his great ſucceſſes. Greedy of fame, impatient of contradiction, without reſerve in his friendſhips, declared in his enmities, this prince could endure no control even from his imperious father, and openly aſpired to that independence, to which his temper, as well as ſome circumſtances in his ſituation, ſtrongly invited him [e]. When William firſt received the ſubmiſſions of the province of Maine, he had promiſed the inhabitants that Robert ſhould be their prince; and before he undertook the expedition againſt England, he had, on the application of the French court, declared him his ſucceſſor in Normandy, and had obliged the barons of that dutchy to do him homage as their future ſovereign. By this artifice, he had endeavoured to appeaſe the jealouſy of his neighbours, as affording them a proſpect of ſeparating England from his dominions on the continent; but when Robert demanded of him the execution of thoſe engagements, he gave him an abſolute refuſal, and told him, according to the homely ſaying, that he never intended to throw off his clothes till he went to bed [f]. Robert openly declared his diſcontent; and was ſuſpected of ſecretly inſtigating the king of France and the earl of Britanny to the oppoſition which they made to William, and which had formerly fruſtrated his attempts upon the town of

[e] Order. Vital. p. 545. Hoveden, p. 457. Flor. Wigorn. p. 639.
[f] Chron. de Mailr. p. 160.

Dol.

Dol. And as the quarrel ſtill augmented, Robert proceeded to entertain a ſtrong jealouſy of his two ſurviving brothers, William and Henry (for Richard was killed in hunting, by a ſtag), who, by greater ſubmiſſion and complaiſance, had acquired the affections of their father. In this diſpoſition on both ſides, the greateſt trifle ſufficed to produce a rupture between them. CHAP. IV. 1076.

THE three princes, reſiding with their father in the caſtle of l'Aigle in Normandy, were one day engaged in ſport together; and after ſome mirth and jollity, the two younger took a fancy of throwing over ſome water on Robert as he paſſed through the court on leaving their apartment[g]; a frolic, which he would naturally have regarded as innocent, had it not been for the ſuggeſtions of Alberic de Grentmeſnil, ſon of that Hugh de Grentmeſnil whom William had formerly deprived of his fortunes, when that baron deſerted him during his greateſt difficulties in England. The young man, mindful of the injury, perſuaded the prince that this action was meant as a public affront, which it behoved him in honour to reſent; and the choleric Robert, drawing his ſword, ran up ſtairs, with an intention of taking revenge on his brothers[h]. The whole caſtle was filled with tumult, which the king himſelf, who haſtened from his apartment, found ſome difficulty to appeaſe. But he could by no means appeaſe the reſentment of his eldeſt ſon, who complaining of his partiality, and fancying that no proper atonement had been made him for the inſult, left the court that very evening, and haſtened to Roüen, with an intention of ſeizing the citadel of that place[i]. But being diſappointed in this view by the precaution and vigilance of Roger de Ivery, the governor, he fled to Hugh de Neufchatel, a powerful Norman baron, who gave him

[g] Order. Vital. p. 545. [h] Ibid. [i] Ibid.

CHAP. IV. 1076. protection in his castles; and he openly levied war against his father[k]. The popular character of the prince, and a similarity of manners, engaged all the young nobility of Normandy and Maine, as well as of Anjou and Britanny, to take part with him; and it was suspected, that Matilda, his mother, whose favourite he was, supported him in his rebellion by secret remittances of money, and by the encouragement which she gave his partisans.

1079. ALL the hereditary provinces of William, as well as his family, were, during several years, thrown into convulsions by this war; and he was at last obliged to have recourse to England, where that species of military government which he had established gave him greater authority than the ancient feudal institutions permitted him to exercise in Normandy. He called over an army of English under his ancient captains, who soon expelled Robert and his adherents from their retreats, and restored the authority of the sovereign in all his dominions. The young prince was obliged to take shelter in the castle of Gerberoy in the Beauvoisis, which the king of France, who secretly fomented all these dissensions, had provided for him. In this fortress he was closely besieged by his father, against whom, having a strong garrison, he made an obstinate defence. There passed under the walls of this place many rencounters, which resembled more the single combats of chivalry, than the military actions of armies; but one of them was remarkable for its circumstances and its event. Robert happened to engage the king, who was concealed by his helmet; and both of them being valiant, a fierce combat ensued, till at last the young prince wounded his father in the arm, and unhorsed him. On his calling out for assistance, his voice discovered him to his son, who, struck with remorse for his past guilt,

[k] Order. Vital. p. 545. Hoveden, p. 457. Sim. Dun. p. 210. Diceto, p. 487.

and

and astonished with the apprehensions of one much greater, which he had so nearly incurred, instantly threw himself at his father's feet, craved pardon for his offences, and offered to purchase forgiveness by any atonement[1]. The resentment harboured by William was so implacable, that he did not immediately correspond to this dutiful submission of his son with like tenderness; but giving him his malediction, departed for his own camp, on Robert's horse, which that prince had assisted him to mount. He soon after raised the siege, and marched with his army to Normandy; where the interposition of the queen, and other common friends, brought about a reconcilement, which was probably not a little forwarded by the generosity of the son's behaviour in this action, and by the returning sense of his past misconduct. The king seemed so fully appeased, that he even took Robert with him into England; where he entrusted him with the command of an army, in order to repel an inroad of Malcolm, king of Scotland, and to retaliate by a like inroad into that country. The Welsh, unable to resist William's power, were, about the same time, necessitated to pay a compensation for their incursions; and every thing was reduced to full tranquillity in this island.

CHAP. IV. 1079.

THIS state of affairs gave William leisure to begin and finish an undertaking, which proves his extensive genius, and does honour to his memory: It was a general survey of all the lands in the kingdom, their extent in each district, their proprietors, tenures, value; the quantity of meadow, pasture, wood, and arable land, which they contained; and in some counties the number of tenants, cottagers, and slaves of all denominations, who lived upon them. He appointed commissioners for this pur-

1081. Domesday-book.

[1] Malmes. p. 106. H. Hunt. p. 369. Hoveden, p. 457. Flor. Wig. p. 639. Sim. Dun. p. 210. Diceto, p. 287. Knyghton, p. 2351. Alur. Beverl. p. 135.

CHAP. IV. 1081. pose, who entered every particular in their register by the verdict of juries; and after a labour of six years (for the work was so long in finishing) brought him an exact account of all the landed property of his kingdom[m]. This monument, called Domesday-book, the most valuable piece of antiquity possessed by any nation, is still preserved in the Exchequer; and though only some extracts of it have hitherto been published, it serves to illustrate to us, in many particulars, the ancient state of England. The great Alfred had finished a like survey of the kingdom in his time, which was long kept at Winchester, and which probably served as a model to William in this undertaking[n].

The king was naturally a great œconomist; and though no prince had ever been more bountiful to his officers and servants, it was merely because he had rendered himself universal proprietor of England, and had a whole kingdom to bestow. He reserved an ample revenue for the crown; and in the general distribution of land among his followers, he kept possession of no less than 1422 manors in different parts of England[o], which paid him rent, either in money, or in corn, cattle, and the usual produce of the soil. An ancient historian computes, that his annual fixed income, besides escheats, fines, reliefs, and other casual profits to a great value, amounted to near 400,000 pounds a year[p]; a sum which, if all circumstances be attended to, will appear wholly incredible. A pound in that age, as we have already observed, contained three

[m] M. Chron. Sax. p. 190. Ingulf, p. 79. Chron. T. Wykes, p. 23. H. Hunt. p. 370. Hoveden, p. 460. M. West. p. 229. Flor. Wigorn. p. 641. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 51. M. Paris, p. 8. The more northern counties were not comprehended in this survey; I suppose because of their wild, uncultivated state.

[n] Ingulf, p. 8.

[o] West's inquiry into the manner of creating peers, p. 24.

[p] Order. Vital. p. 523. He says 1060 pounds and some odd shillings and pence a day.

CHAP. IV. 1081.

times the weight of silver that it does at present; and the same weight of silver, by the most probable computation, would purchase near ten times more of the necessaries of life, though not in the same proportion of the finer manufactures. This revenue, therefore, of William, would be equal to at least nine or ten millions at present; and as that prince had neither fleet nor army to support, the former being only an occasional expence, and the latter being maintained, without any charge to him, by his military vassals, we must thence conclude, that no emperor or prince, in any age or nation, can be compared to the Conqueror for opulence and riches. This leads us to suspect a great mistake in the computation of the historian; though, if we consider that avarice is always imputed to William, as one of his vices, and that having by the sword rendered himself master of all the lands in the kingdom, he would certainly in the partition retain a great proportion for his own share; we can scarcely be guilty of any error in asserting, that perhaps no king of England was ever more opulent, was more able to support, by his revenue, the splendour and magnificence of a court, or could bestow more on his pleasures, or in liberalities to his servants and favourites [q].

The new forest.

THERE was one pleasure, to which William, as well as all the Normans and ancient Saxons, was extremely addicted, and that was hunting: But this pleasure he indulged more at the expence of his unhappy subjects, whose interests he always disregarded, than to the loss or diminution of his own revenue. Not content with those large forests, which former kings possessed in all parts of England; he resolved to make a new forest near Winchester, the usual place of his residence: And for that purpose he laid waste the country in Hampshire

[q] Fortescue, de Dom. reg. & politic. cap. 111.

CHAP. IV. 1081. for an extent of thirty miles, expelled the inhabitants from their houses, seized their property, even demolished churches and convents, and made the sufferers no compensation for the injury [r]. At the same time, he enacted new laws, by which he prohibited all his subjects from hunting in any of his forests, and rendered the penalties more severe than ever had been inflicted for such offences. The killing of a deer or boar, or even a hare, was punished with the loss of the delinquent's eyes; and that at a time, when the killing of a man could be atoned for by paying a moderate fine or composition.

THE transactions recorded during the remainder of this reign, may be considered more as domestic occurrences, which concern the prince, than as national events, which regard England. Odo, bishop of Baieux, the king's uterine brother, whom he had created earl of Kent, and entrusted with a great share of power during his whole reign, had amassed immense riches; and agreeably to the usual progress of human wishes, he began to regard his present acquisitions but as a step to farther grandeur. He had formed the chimerical project of buying the papacy; and though Gregory, the reigning pope, was not of advanced years, the prelate had confided so much in the predictions of an astrologer, that he reckoned upon the pontiff's death, and upon attaining, by his own intrigues and money, that envied state of greatness. Resolving, therefore, to remit all his riches to Italy, he had persuaded many considerable barons, and, among the rest, Hugh earl of Chester, to take the same course; in hopes that, when he should mount the papal throne, he would bestow on them more considerable establishments in that country. The king, from whom all these projects had been care-

[r] Malmes. p. 3. H. Hunt. p. 731. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 258.

fully

fully concealed, at laſt got intelligence of the deſign, and ordered Odo to be arreſted. His officers, from reſpect to the immunities which the eccleſiaſtics now aſſumed, ſcrupled to execute the command, till the king himſelf was obliged in perſon to ſeize him; and when Odo inſiſted that he was a prelate, and exempt from all temporal juriſdiction, William replied, that he arreſted him not as biſhop of Baieux, but as earl of Kent. He was ſent priſoner to Normandy; and notwithſtanding the remonſtrances and menaces of Gregory, was detained in cuſtody during the remainder of this reign. CHAP. IV. 1082.

ANOTHER domeſtic event gave the king much more concern: It was the death of Matilda, his conſort, whom he tenderly loved, and for whom he had ever preſerved the moſt ſincere friendſhip. Three years afterwards he paſſed into Normandy, and carried with him Edgar Atheling, to whom he willingly granted permiſſion to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He was detained on the continent by a miſunderſtanding, which broke out between him and the king of France, and which was occaſioned by inroads made into Normandy by ſome French barons on the frontiers. It was little in the power of princes at that time to reſtrain their licentious nobility; but William ſuſpected, that theſe barons durſt not have provoked his indignation, had they not been aſſured of the countenance and protection of Philip. His diſpleaſure was increaſed by the account he received of ſome railleries which that monarch had thrown out againſt him. William, who was become corpulent, had been detained in bed ſome time by ſickneſs; upon which Philip expreſſed his ſurpriſe that his brother of England ſhould be ſo long in being delivered of his big belly. The king ſent him word, that, as ſoon as he was up, he would preſent ſo many lights

1083.

1087. War with France.

CHAP. IV. 1087. at Notre-dame, as would perhaps give little pleasure to the king of France; alluding to the usual practice at that time of women after child-birth. Immediately on his recovery, he led an army into L'Isle de France, and laid every thing waste with fire and sword. He took the town of Mante, which he reduced to ashes. But the progress of these hostilities was stopped by an accident, which soon after put an end to William's life. His horse starting aside of a sudden, he bruised his belly on the pommel of the saddle; and being in a bad habit of body, as well as somewhat advanced in years, he began to apprehend the consequences, and ordered himself to be carried in a litter to the monastery of St. Gervas. Finding his illness increase, and being sensible of the approach of death, he discovered at last the vanity of all human grandeur, and was struck with remorse for those horrible cruelties and acts of violence, which, in the attainment and defence of it, he had committed during the course of his reign over England. He endeavoured to make atonement by presents to churches and monasteries; and he issued orders, that earl Morcar, Siward Bearne, and other English prisoners, should be set at liberty. He was even prevailed on, though not without reluctance, to consent, with his dying breath, to release his brother Odo, against whom he was extremely incensed. He left Normandy and Maine to his eldest son Robert: He wrote to Lanfranc, desiring him to crown William king of England: He bequeathed to Henry nothing but the possessions of his mother Matilda; but foretold, that he would one day surpass both his brothers in power and opulence. 9th Sept. Death. He expired in the sixty-third year of his age, in the twenty-first year of his reign over England, and in the fifty-fourth of that over Normandy.

FEW

1087.

and character of William the Conqueror.

Few princes have been more fortunate than this great monarch, or were better entitled to grandeur and prosperity, from the abilities and the vigour of mind which he displayed in all his conduct. His spirit was bold and enterprising, yet guided by prudence: His ambition, which was exorbitant, and lay little under the restraints of justice, still less under those of humanity, ever submitted to the dictates of sound policy. Born in an age when the minds of men were intractable and unacquainted with submission, he was yet able to direct them to his purposes; and partly from the ascendant of his vehement character, partly from art and dissimulation, to establish an unlimited authority. Though not insensible to generosity, he was hardened against compassion; and he seemed equally ostentatious and equally ambitious of show and parade in his clemency and in his severity. The maxims of his administration were austere; but might have been useful, had they been solely employed to preserve order in an established government[s]: They were ill calculated for softening the rigours, which, under the most gentle management, are inseparable from conquest. His attempt against England was the last great enterprise of the kind, which, during the course of seven hundred years, has fully succeeded in Europe; and the force of his genius broke through those limits, which first the feudal institutions, then the refined policy of princes, have fixed to the several states of Christendom. Though he rendered himself infinitely odious to his English subjects, he transmitted his power to his posterity, and the throne is still filled by his descendants: A proof, that the foundations which he laid were firm and solid, and that, amidst all his violence, while he seemed only to gratify the present passion, he had still an eye towards futurity.

[s] M. West. p. 230. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 258.

SOME

CHAP. IV. 1087.

SOME writers have been desirous of refusing to this prince the title of Conqueror, in the sense which that term commonly bears; and, on pretence that the word is sometimes in old books applied to such as make an acquisition of territory by any means, they are willing to reject William's title by right of war, to the crown of England. It is needless to enter into a controversy, which, by the terms of it, must necessarily degenerate into a dispute of words. It suffices to say, that the duke of Normandy's first invasion of the island was hostile; that his subsequent administration was entirely supported by arms; that in the very frame of his laws he made a distinction between the Normans and English, to the advantage of the former [t]; that he acted in every thing as absolute master over the natives, whose interest and affections he totally disregarded; and that if there was an interval when he assumed the appearance of a legal sovereign, the period was very short, and was nothing but a temporary sacrifice, which he, as has been the case with most conquerors, was obliged to make, of his inclination to his present policy. Scarce any of those revolutions, which, both in history and in common language, have always been denominated conquests, appear equally violent, or were attended with so sudden an alteration both of power and property. The Roman state, which spread its dominion over Europe, left the rights of individuals in a great measure untouched; and those civilized conquerors, while they made their own country the seat of empire, found that they could draw most advantage from the subjected provinces by securing to the natives the free enjoyment of their own laws and of their private possessions. The barbarians, who subdued the Roman empire, though they settled in the conquered countries, yet being ac-

[t] Hoveden, p. 600.

cuſtomed to a rude uncultivated life, found a part only of the land ſufficient to ſupply all their wants; and they were not tempted to ſeize extenſive poſſeſſions, which they knew neither how to cultivate nor enjoy. But the Normans and other foreigners, who followed the ſtandard of William, while they made the vanquiſhed kingdom the ſeat of government, were yet ſo far advanced in arts as to be acquainted with the advantages of a large property; and having totally ſubdued the natives, they puſhed the rights of conqueſt (very extenſive in the eyes of avarice and ambition, however narrow in thoſe of reaſon) to the utmoſt extremity againſt them. Except the former conqueſt of England by the Saxons themſelves, who were induced, by peculiar circumſtances, to proceed even to the extermination of the natives, it would be difficult to find in all hiſtory a revolution more deſtructive, or attended with a more complete ſubjection of the ancient inhabitants. Contumely ſeems even to have been wantonly added to oppreſſion [u]; and the natives were univerſally reduced to ſuch a ſtate of meanneſs and poverty, that the Engliſh name became a term of reproach; and ſeveral generations elapſed before one family of Saxon pedigree was raiſed to any conſiderable honours, or could ſo much as attain the rank of baron of the realm [w]. Theſe facts are ſo apparent from the whole tenour of the Engliſh hiſtory, that none would have been tempted to deny or elude them, were they not heated by the controverſies of faction; while one party was *abſurdly* afraid of thoſe *abſurd* conſequences which they ſaw the other party inclined to draw from this event. But it is evident that the preſent rights and privileges of the people, who are

[u] H. Hunt. p. 370. Brompton, p. 980. [w] So late as the reign of king Stephen, the earl of Albemarle, before the battle of the Standard, addreſſed the officers of his army in theſe terms, *Proceres Angliæ clariſſimi, & genere Normanni, &c.* Brompton, p. 1026. See farther Abbas Rieval, p. 339, &c. All the barons and military men of England ſtill called themſelves Normans.

a mix-

CHAP. IV. 1087. a mixture of Engliſh and Normans, can never be affected by a tranſaction, which paſſed ſeven hundred years ago; and as all ancient authors *, who lived neareſt the time, and beſt knew the ſtate of the country, unanimouſly ſpeak of the Norman dominion as a conqueſt by war and arms, no reaſonable man, from the fear of imaginary conſequences, will ever be tempted to reject their concurring and undoubted teſtimony.

KING William had iſſue, beſides his three ſons who ſurvived him, five daughters, to wit, (1.) Cicily, a nun in the monaſtery of Feſchamp, afterwards abbeſs in the Holy Trinity at Caen, where ſhe died in 1127. (2.) Conſtantia, married to Alan Fergent, earl of Britanny. She died without iſſue. (3.) Alice, contracted to Harold. (4.) Adela, married to Stephen earl of Blois, by whom ſhe had four ſons, William, Theobald, Henry, and Stephen; of whom the elder was neglected on account of the imbecility of his underſtanding. (5.) Agatha, who died a virgin, but was betrothed to the king of Gallicia. She died on her journey thither, before ſhe joined her bridegroom.

* See note [L] at the end of the volume.

CHAP. V.

WILLIAM RUFUS.

Accession of William Rufus——Conspiracy against the king——Invasion of Normandy——The Crusades——Acquisition of Normandy——Quarrel with Anselm the primate——Death——and Character of William Rufus.

CHAP. V. 1087. Accession of William Rufus.

WILLIAM, sirnamed *Rufus*, or the *Red*, from the colour of his hair, had no sooner procured his father's recommendatory letter to Lanfranc the primate, than he hastened to take measures for securing to himself the government of England. Sensible that a deed so unformal, and so little prepared, which violated Robert's right of primogeniture, might meet with great opposition, he trusted entirely for success to his own celerity; and having left St. Gervas while William was breathing his last, he arrived in England before intelligence of his father's death had reached that kingdom [x]. Pretending orders from the king, he secured the fortresses of Dover, Pevensey, and Hastings, whose situation rendered them of the greatest importance; and he got possession of the royal treasure at Winchester, amounting to the sum of sixty thousand pounds, by which he hoped to encourage and increase his partisans [y]. The primate, whose rank and reputation in the kingdom gave him great authority, had been entrusted with the care of his education, and had conferred on him the honour of knighthood [z]; and being connected with him by

[x] W. Malmes. p. 120. M. Paris p. 10. [y] Chron. Sax. p. 192. Brompton, p. 983. [z] W. Malmes. p. 120. M. Paris, p. 10. Thom. Rudborne, p. 263.

these

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these ties, and probably deeming his pretensions just, declared that he would pay a willing obedience to the last will of the Conqueror, his friend and benefactor. Having assembled some bishops, and some of the principal nobility, he instantly proceeded to the ceremony of crowning the new king[a]; and by this dispatch endeavoured to prevent all faction and resistance. At the same time Robert, who had been already acknowledged successor to Normandy, took peaceable possession of that dutchy.

Conspiracy against the king.

BUT though this partition appeared to have been made without any violence or opposition, there remained in England many causes of discontent, which seemed to menace that kingdom with a sudden revolution. The barons, who generally possessed large estates both in England and in Normandy, were uneasy at the separation of those territories; and foresaw, that as it would be impossible for them to preserve long their allegiance to two masters, they must necessarily resign either their ancient patrimony or their new acquisitions[b]. Robert's title to the dutchy they esteemed incontestible; his claim to the kingdom plausible; and they all desired that this prince, who alone had any pretensions to unite these states, should be put in possession of both. A comparison also of the personal qualities of the two brothers led them to give the preference to the elder. The duke was brave, open, sincere, generous: Even his predominant faults, his extreme indolence and facility, were not disagreeable to those haughty barons, who affected independence, and submitted with reluctance to a vigorous administration in their sovereign. The king, though equally brave, was violent, haughty, tyrannical, and seemed disposed to govern more by the fear than by the love of his subjects. Odo bishop of Baieux, and Robert earl of Mortaigne, maternal brothers of the Conqueror,

[a] Hoveden, p. 461. [b] Order. Vitalis, p. 666.

envying

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envying the great credit of Lanfranc, which was increafed by his late fervices, enforced all thefe motives with their partifans, and engaged them in a formal confpiracy to dethrone the king. They communicated their defign to Euftace count of Bologne, Roger earl of Shrewfbury and Arundel, Robert de Belefme, his eldeft fon, William bifhop of Durham, Robert de Moubray, Roger Bigod, Hugh de Grentmefnil; and they eafily procured the affent of thefe potent noblemen. The confpirators, retiring to their caftles, haftened to put themfelves in a military pofture; and expecting to be foon fupported by a powerful army from Normandy, they had already begun hoftilities in many places.

THE king, fenfible of his perilous fituation, endeavoured to engage the affections of the native Englifh. As that people were now fo thoroughly fubdued that they no longer afpired to the recovery of their ancient liberties, and were content with the profpect of fome mitigation in the tyranny of the Norman princes, they zealoufly embraced William's caufe, upon receiving general promifes of good treatment, and of enjoying the licence of hunting in the royal forefts. The king was foon in a fituation to take the field; and as he knew the danger of delay, he fuddenly marched into Kent; where his uncles had already feized the fortreffes of Pevenfey and Rochefter. Thefe places he fucceffively reduced by famine; and though he was prevailed on by the earl of Chefter, William de Warrenne, and Robert Fitz Hammon, who had embraced his caufe, to fpare the lives of the rebels, he confifcated all their eftates, and banifhed them the kingdom [c]. This fuccefs gave authority to his negotiations with Roger earl of Shrewfbury, whom he detached from the confederates: And as his powerful fleet, joined to the indolent conduct of Robert, prevented the

[c] Chron. Sax. p. 195. Order. Vital. p. 668.

arrival

CHAP. V. 1087. arrival of the Norman ſuccours, all the other rebels found no reſource but in flight or ſubmiſſion. Some of them received a pardon; but the greater part were attainted; and the king beſtowed their eſtates on the Norman barons, who had remained faithful to him.

1089. WILLIAM, freed from the danger of theſe inſurrections, took little care of fulfilling his promiſes to the Engliſh, who ſtill found themſelves expoſed to the ſame oppreſſions which they had undergone during the reign of the Conqueror, and which were rather augmented by the violent impetuous temper of the preſent monarch. The death of Lanfranc, who retained great influence over him, gave ſoon after a full career to his tyranny; and all orders of men found reaſon to complain of an arbitrary and illegal adminiſtration. Even the privileges of the church, held ſacred in thoſe days, were a feeble rampart againſt his uſurpations. He ſeized the temporalities of all the vacant biſhoprics and abbies; he delayed the appointing of ſucceſſors to thoſe dignities, that he might the longer enjoy the profits of their revenue; he beſtowed ſome of the church lands in property on his captains and favourites; and he openly ſet to ſale ſuch ſees and abbies as he thought proper to diſpoſe of. Though the murmurs of the eccleſiaſtics, which were quickly propagated to the nation, roſe high againſt this grievance, the terror of William's authority, confirmed by the ſuppreſſion of the late inſurrections, retained every one in ſubjection, and preſerved general tranquillity in England.

1090. Invaſion of Normandy. THE king even thought himſelf enabled to diſturb his brother in the poſſeſſion of Normandy. The looſe and negligent adminiſtration of that prince had emboldened the Norman barons to affect a great independency; and their mutual quarrels and devaſtations had rendered that whole territory a ſcene of violence and outrage. Two of them, Walter

and

and Odo, were bribed by William to deliver the fortreſſes of St. Valori and Albemarle into his hands: Others ſoon after imitated the example of revolt; while Philip, king of France, who ought to have protected his vaſſal in the poſſeſſion of his fief, was, after making ſome efforts in his favour, engaged by large preſents to remain neuter. The duke had alſo reaſon to apprehend danger from the intrigues of his brother Henry. This young prince, who had inherited nothing of his father's great poſſeſſions, but ſome of his money, had furniſhed Robert, while he was making his preparations againſt England, with the ſum of three thouſand marks; and, in return for ſo ſlender a ſupply, had been put in poſſeſſion of the Cotentin, which comprehended near a third of the dutchy of Normandy. Robert afterwards, upon ſome ſuſpicion, threw him into priſon; but finding himſelf expoſed to invaſion from the king of England, and dreading the conjunction of the two brothers againſt him, he now gave Henry his liberty, and even made uſe of his aſſiſtance in ſuppreſſing the inſurrections of his rebellious ſubjects. Conan, a rich burgeſs of Roüen, had entered into a conſpiracy to deliver that city to William; but Henry, on the detection of his guilt, carried the traitor up to a high tower, and with his own hands flung him from the battlements.

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The king appeared in Normandy at the head of an army; and affairs ſeemed to have come to extremity between the brothers; when the nobility on both ſides, ſtrongly connected by intereſt and alliances, interpoſed and mediated an accommodation. The chief advantage of this treaty accrued to William, who obtained poſſeſſion of the territory of Eu, the towns of Aumale, Feſcamp, and other places: But in return he promiſed that he would aſſiſt his brother in ſubduing Maine, which had rebelled; and that the Norman barons, attainted in Robert's cauſe, ſhould be reſtored to their eſtates in

 England.

CHAP. V. 1089.

England. The two brothers alſo ſtipulated, that on the demiſe of either without iſſue, the ſurvivor ſhould inherit all his dominions; and twelve of the moſt powerful barons on each ſide ſwore, that they would employ their power to inſure the effectual execution of the whole treaty [d]: A ſtrong proof of the great independence and authority of the nobles in thoſe ages!

PRINCE Henry, diſguſted that ſo little care had been taken of his intereſts in this accommodation, retired to St. Michael's Mount, a ſtrong fortreſs on the coaſt of Normandy, and infeſted the neighbourhood with his incurſions. Robert and William, with their joint forces, beſieged him in this place, and had nearly reduced him by the ſcarcity of water; when the elder, hearing of his diſtreſs, granted him permiſſion to ſupply himſelf, and alſo ſent him ſome pipes of wine for his own table. Being reproved by William for this ill-timed generoſity, he replied, *What, ſhall I ſuffer my brother to die of thirſt? Where ſhall we find another when he is gone?* The king alſo, during this ſiege, performed an act of generoſity which was leſs ſuitable to his character. Riding out one day alone, to take a ſurvey of the fortreſs, he was attacked by two ſoldiers and diſmounted. One of them drew his ſword in order to diſpatch him; when the king exclaimed, *Hold knave! I am the king of England.* The ſoldier ſuſpended his blow; and raiſing the king from the ground, with expreſſions of reſpect, received a handſome reward, and was taken into his ſervice. Prince Henry was ſoon after obliged to capitulate; and being deſpoiled of all his patrimony, wandered about for ſome time with very few attendants, and often in great poverty.

[d] Chron. Sax. p. 197. W. Malm. p. 121. Hoveden, p. 462. M. Paris, p. 11. Annal. Waverl. p. 137. W. Heming. p. 463. Sim. Dunelm. p. 216. Brompton, p. 986.

THE continued inteſtine diſcord among the barons was alone in that age deſtructive: The public wars were commonly ſhort and feeble, produced little bloodſhed, and were attended with no memorable event. To this Norman war, which was ſo ſoon concluded, there ſucceeded hoſtilities with Scotland, which were not of longer duration. Robert here commanded his brother's army, and obliged Malcolm to accept of peace, and do homage to the crown of England. This peace was not more durable. Malcolm, two years after, levying an army, invaded England; and after ravaging Northumberland, he laid ſiege to Alnwick, where a party of earl Moubray's troops falling upon him by ſurpriſe, a ſharp action enſued, in which Malcolm was ſlain. This incident interrupted for ſome years the regular ſucceſſion to the Scottiſh crown. Though Malcolm left legitimate ſons, his brother Donald, on account of the youth of theſe princes, was advanced to the throne; but kept not long poſſeſſion of it. Duncan, natural ſon of Malcolm, formed a conſpiracy againſt him; and being aſſiſted by William with a ſmall force, made himſelf maſter of the kingdom. New broils enſued with Normandy. The frank, open, remiſs temper of Robert was ill fitted to withſtand the intereſted rapacious character of William, who, ſupported by greater power, was ſtill encroaching on his brother's poſſeſſions, and inſtigating his turbulent barons to rebellion againſt him. The king, having gone over to Normandy to ſupport his partiſans, ordered an army of twenty thouſand men to be levied in England, and to be conducted to the ſea-coaſt, as if they were inſtantly to be embarked. Here Ralph Flambard, the king's miniſter, and the chief inſtrument of his extortions, exacted ten ſhillings a-piece from them, in lieu of their ſervice, and then diſmiſſed them into their ſeveral counties. This money was ſo ſkilfully employed by William, that it rendered him better ſer-

1091.

1093.

1094.

CHAP. V. 1094. vice than he could have expected from the army. He engaged the French king by new presents to depart from the protection of Robert; and he daily bribed the Norman barons to desert his service: But was prevented from pushing his advantages by an incursion of the Welsh, which obliged him to return to England. He found no difficulty in repelling the enemy; but was not able to make any considerable impression on a country guarded by its mountainous

1095. situation. A conspiracy of his own barons, which was detected at this time, appeared a more serious concern, and engrossed all his attention. Robert Moubray, earl of Northumberland, was at the head of this combination; and he engaged in it the count d'Eu, Richard de Tunbridge, Roger de Lacey, and many others. The purpose of the conspirators was to dethrone the king, and to advance in his stead Stephen, count of Aumale, nephew to the Conqueror. William's dispatch prevented the design from taking effect, and disconcerted the conspirators. Moubray made some resistance; but being taken prisoner, was attainted, and thrown into confinement, where he died about thirty years after.

1096. The count d'Eu denied his concurrence in the plot; and to justify himself, fought, in the presence of the court at Windsor, a duel with Geoffrey Bainard who accused him. But being worsted in the combat, he was condemned to be castrated, and to have his eyes put out. William de Alderi, another conspirator, was supposed to be treated with more rigour when he was sentenced to be hanged.

The crusades.

BUT the noise of these petty wars and commotions was quite sunk in the tumult of the crusades, which now engrossed the attention of Europe, and have ever since engaged the curiosity of mankind, as the most signal and most durable monument of human folly that has yet appeared in any age or nation. After Mahomet had, by means of his pretended revelations, united the dispersed Arabians under one head,

head, they iſſued forth from their deſerts in great multitudes; and being animated with zeal for their new religion, and ſupported by the vigour of their new government, they made deep impreſſion on the eaſtern empire, which was far in the decline, with regard both to military diſcipline and to civil policy. Jeruſalem by its ſituation, became one of their moſt early conqueſts; and the Chriſtians had the mortification to ſee the holy ſepulchre, and the other places, conſecrated by the preſence of their religious founder, fallen into the poſſeſſion of infidels. But the Arabians or Saracens were ſo employed in military enterpriſes, by which they ſpread their empire in a few years from the banks of the Ganges to the Streights of Gibraltar, that they had no leiſure for theological controverſy: And though the Alcoran, the original monument of their faith, ſeems to contain ſome violent precepts, they were much leſs infected with the ſpirit of bigotry and perſecution, than the indolent and ſpeculative Greeks, who were continually refining on the ſeveral articles of their religious ſyſtem. They gave little diſturbance to thoſe zealous pilgrims, who daily flocked to Jeruſalem; and they allowed every man, after paying a moderate tribute, to viſit the holy ſepulchre, to perform his religious duties, and to return in peace. But the Turcomans or Turks, a tribe of Tartars, who had embraced Mahometaniſm, having wreſted Syria from the Saracens, and having, in the year 1065, made themſelves maſters of Jeruſalem, rendered the pilgrimage much more difficult and dangerous to the Chriſtians. The barbarity of their manners, and the confuſions attending their unſettled government, expoſed the pilgrims to many inſults, robberies, and extortions; and theſe zealots, returning from their meritorious fatigues and ſufferings, filled all Chriſtendom with indignation againſt the infidels, who profaned the holy city by their preſence, and derided the ſacred myſteries in the very place of

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their completion. Gregory VII among the other vast ideas which he entertained, had formed the design of uniting all the western Christians against the Mahometans; but the egregious and violent invasions of that pontiff on the civil power of princes, had created him so many enemies, and had rendered his schemes so suspicious, that he was not able to make great progress in this undertaking. The work was reserved for a meaner instrument, whose low condition in life exposed him to no jealousy, and whose folly was well calculated to coincide with the prevailing principles of the times.

Peter, commonly called the Hermit, a native of Amiens in Picardy, had made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Being deeply affected with the dangers to which that act of piety now exposed the pilgrims, as well as with the instances of oppression under which the eastern Christians laboured, he entertained the bold, and in all appearance impracticable project of leading into Asia, from the farthest extremities of the West, armies sufficient to subdue those potent and warlike nations which now held the holy city in subjection [c]. He proposed his views to Martin II. who filled the papal chair, and who, though sensible of the advantages which the head of the Christian religion must reap from a religious war, and though he esteemed the blind zeal of Peter a proper means for effecting the purpose [f], resolved not to interpose his authority, till he saw a greater probability of success. He summoned a council at Placentia, which consisted of four thousand ecclesiastics, and thirty thousand seculars; and which was o numerous that no hall could contain the multitude, and it was necessary to hold the assembly in a plain. The harangues of the pope, and of Peter himself, representing the dismal situation of their brethren in the east, and the indignity suffered by

[c] Gul. Tyrius, lib. 1. cap. 11. M. Paris, p. 17.

[f] Gul. Tyrius, lib. 1. cap. 13.

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by the Chriſtian name, in allowing the holy city to remain in the hands of infidels, here found the minds of men ſo well prepared, that the whole multitude ſuddenly and violently declared for the war, and ſolemnly devoted themſelves to perform this ſervice, ſo meritorious, as they believed it, to God and religion.

BUT though Italy ſeemed thus to have zealouſly embraced the enterpriſe, Martin knew, that, in order to enſure ſucceſs, it was neceſſary to enliſt the greater and more warlike nations in the ſame engagement; and having previouſly exhorted Peter to viſit the chief cities and ſovereigns of Chriſtendom, he ſummoned another council at Clermont in Auvergne [g]. The fame of this great and pious deſign, being now univerſally diffuſed, procured the attendance of the greateſt prelates, nobles, and princes; and when the pope and the hermit renewed their pathetic exhortations, the whole aſſembly, as if impelled by an immediate inſpiration, not moved by their preceding impreſſions, exclaimed with one voice, *It is the will of God, It is the will of God!* Words deemed ſo memorable, and ſo much the reſult of a divine influence, that they were employed as the ſignal of rendezvous and battle in all the future exploits of thoſe adventurers [h]. Men of all ranks flew to arms with the utmoſt ardour; and an exterior ſymbol too, a circumſtance of chief moment, was here choſen by the devoted combatants. The ſign of the croſs, which had been hitherto ſo much revered among Chriſtians, and which, the more it was an object of reproach among the Pagan world, was the more paſſionately cheriſhed by them, became the badge of union, and was affixed to their right ſhoulder, by all who enliſted themſelves in this ſacred warfare [i].

[g] Concil. tom. x. Concil. Clarom. Matth. Paris, p. 16. M. Weſt, p. 233.

[h] Hiſtoria Bell. Sacri, tom. i. Muſæi Ital.

[i] Hiſt. Bell. Sacri, tom. i. Muſ. Ital. Order. Vital. p. 721.

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EUROPE was at this time ſunk into profound ignorance and ſuperſtition: The eccleſiaſtics had acquired the greateſt aſcendant over the human mind: The people, who, being little reſtrained by honour, and leſs by law, abandoned themſelves to the worſt crimes and diſorders, knew of no other expiation than the obſervances impoſed on them by their ſpiritual paſtors: And it was eaſy to repreſent the holy war as an equivalent for all penances[k], and an atonement for every violation of juſtice and humanity. But, amidſt the abject ſuperſtition which now prevailed, the military ſpirit alſo had univerſally diffuſed itſelf; and though not ſupported by art or diſcipline, was become the general paſſion of the nations governed by the feudal law. All the great lords poſſeſſed the right of peace and war: They were engaged in perpetual hoſtilities with each other: The open country was become a ſcene of outrage and diſorder: The cities, ſtill mean and poor, were neither guarded by walls nor protected by privileges, and were expoſed to every inſult: Individuals were obliged to depend for ſafety on their own force, or their private alliances: And valour was the only excellence which was held in eſteem, or gave one man the pre-eminence above another. When all the particular ſuperſtitions, therefore, were here united in one great object, the ardour for military enterpriſes took the ſame direction; and Europe, impelled by its two ruling paſſions, was looſened, as it were, from its foundations, and ſeemed to precipitate itſelf in one united body upon the eaſt.

ALL orders of men, deeming the cruſades the only road to heaven, enliſted themſelves under theſe ſacred banners, and were impatient to open the way with their ſword to the holy city. Nobles, artiſans, peaſants, even prieſts[l], inrolled their names; and to decline this meritorious ſervice was branded with

[k] Order. Vital. p. 720. [l] Ibid.

the reproach of impiety, or what perhaps was esteemed still more disgraceful, of cowardice and pusillanimity [m]. The infirm and aged contributed to the expedition by presents and money; and many of them, not satisfied with the merit of this atonement, attended it in person, and were determined, if possible, to breathe their last in sight of that city where their Saviour had died for them. Women themselves, concealing their sex under the disguise of armour, attended the camp; and commonly forgot still more the duty of the sex, by prostituting themselves, without reserve, to the army [n]. The greatest criminals were forward in a service, which they regarded as a propitiation for all crimes; and the most enormous disorders were, during the course of those expeditions, committed by men enured to wickedness, encouraged by example, and impelled by necessity. The multitude of the adventurers soon became so great, that their more sagacious leaders, Hugh count of Vermandois, brother to the French king, Raymond count of Toulouse, Godfrey of Boüillon, prince of Brabant, and Stephen count of Blois [o], became apprehensive lest the greatness itself of the armament should disappoint its purpose; and they permitted an undisciplined multitude, computed at 300,000 men, to go before them, under the command of Peter the Hermit and Walter the Moneyless [p]. These men took the road towards Constantinople through Hungary and Bulgaria; and trusting that Heaven, by supernatural assistance, would supply all their necessities, they made no provision for subsistence on their march. They soon found themselves obliged to obtain by plunder, what they had vainly expected from miracles; and the enraged inhabitants of the countries through which they passed, gathering together in arms, attacked the disorderly multitude, and put

[m] W. Malm. p. 133. [n] Vertot Hist. de Chev. de Malte, vol. i. p. 46. [o] Sim. Dunelm. p. 222. [p] Matth. Paris, p. 17.

CHAP. V. 1096. them to slaughter without resistance. The more disciplined armies followed after; and passing the streights at Constantinople, they were mustered in the plains of Asia, and amounted in the whole to the number of 700,000 combatants [q].

Amidst this universal frenzy which spread itself by contagion throughout Europe, especially in France and Germany, men were not entirely forgetful of their present interests; and both those who went on this expedition, and those who stayed behind, entertained schemes of gratifying, by its means, their avarice or their ambition. The nobles who enlisted themselves were moved, from the romantic spirit of the age, to hope for opulent establishments in the east, the chief seat of arts and commerce during those ages; and in pursuit of these chimerical projects, they sold at the lowest price their ancient castles and inheritances, which had now lost all value in their eyes. The greater princes, who remained at home, besides establishing peace in their dominions by giving occupation abroad to the inquietude and martial disposition of their subjects, took the opportunity of annexing to their crown many considerable fiefs, either by purchase, or by the extinction of heirs. The pope frequently turned the zeal of the crusades from the infidels against his own enemies, whom he represented as equally criminal with the enemies of Christ. The convents and other religious societies bought the possessions of the adventurers; and as the contributions of the faithful were commonly entrusted to their management, they often diverted to this purpose what was intended to be employed against the infidels [r]. But no one was a more immediate gainer by this epidemic fury than the king of England, who kept aloof from all connexions with those fanatical and romantic warriors.

[q] Matth. Paris, p. 20, 21.

[r] Padre Paolo Hist. delle benef. ecclesiast. p. 128.

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1096. Acquisition of Normandy.

Robert duke of Normandy, impelled by the bravery and mistaken generosity of his spirit, had early enlisted himself in the crusade; but being always unprovided with money, he found that it would be impracticable for him to appear in a manner suitable to his rank and station at the head of his numerous vassals and subjects, who, transported with the general rage, were determined to follow him into Asia. He resolved, therefore, to mortgage, or rather to sell his dominions, which he had not talents to govern; and he offered them to his brother William, for the very unequal sum of ten thousand marks[s]. The bargain was soon concluded: The king raised the money by violent extortions on his subjects of all ranks, even on the convents, who were obliged to melt their plate in order to furnish the quota demanded of them[t]: He was put in possession of Normandy and Maine, and Robert, providing himself with a magnificent train, set out for the Holy Land, in pursuit of glory, and in full confidence of securing his eternal salvation.

The smallness of this sum, with the difficulties which William found in raising it, suffices alone to refute the account which is heedlessly adopted by historians, of the enormous revenue of the Conqueror. Is it credible, that Robert would consign to the rapacious hands of his brother such considerable dominions, for a sum, which, according to that account, made not a week's income of his father's English revenue alone? Or that the king of England could not on demand, without oppressing his subjects, have been able to pay him the money? The Conqueror, it is agreed, was frugal as well as rapacious; yet his treasure, at his death,

[s] W. Malm. p. 123. Chron. T. Wykes, p. 24. Annal. Waverl. p. 139. W. Heming. p. 467. Flor. Wig. p. 648. Sim. Dunelm. p. 222. Knyghton, p. 2364.

[t] Eadmer, p. 35. W. Malm. p. 123. W. Heming. p. 467.

exceeded

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exceeded not 60,000 pounds, which hardly amounted to his income for two months: Another certain refutation of that exaggerated account.

The fury of the crusades, during this age, less infected England than the neighbouring kingdoms; probably because the Norman conquerors, finding their settlement in that kingdom still somewhat precarious, durst not abandon their homes in quest of distant adventures. The selfish interested spirit also of the king, which kept him from kindling in the general flame, checked its progress among his subjects; and as he is accused of open profaneness [u], and was endued with a sharp wit [w], it is likely that he made the romantic chivalry of the crusades the object of his perpetual raillery. As an instance of his irreligion, we are told, that he once accepted of sixty marks from a Jew, whose son had been converted to Christianity, and who engaged him by that present to assist him in bringing back the youth to Judaism. William employed both menaces and persuasion for that purpose; but finding the convert obstinate in his new faith, he sent for the father and told him, that as he had not succeeded, it was not just that he should keep the present; but as he had done his utmost, it was but equitable that he should be paid for his pains; and he would therefore retain only thirty marks of the money [x]. At another time, it is said, he sent for some learned Christian theologians and some rabbies, and bade them fairly dispute the question of their religion in his presence: He was perfectly indifferent between them; had his ears open to reason and conviction; and would embrace that doctrine which upon comparison should be found supported by the most solid arguments [y]. If this story be true, it is probable that he meant only to amuse himself by turning both into ridicule: But we must

[u] G. Newbr. p. 358. W. Gemet. p. 292. [w] W. Malm. p. 122. [x] Eadmer, p. 47. [y] W. Malm. p. 123.

be

be cautious of admitting every thing related by the monkish historians to the disadvantage of this prince: He had the misfortune to be engaged in quarrels with the ecclesiastics, particularly with Anselm, commonly called St. Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury; and it is no wonder his memory should be blackened by the historians of that order.

Quarrel with Anselm, the primate.

After the death of Lanfranc, the king for several years retained in his own hands the revenues of Canterbury, as he did those of many other vacant bishoprics; but falling into a dangerous sickness, he was seized with remorse, and the clergy represented to him, that he was in danger of eternal perdition, if before his death he did not make atonement for those multiplied impieties and sacrileges, of which he had been guilty [z]. He resolved therefore to supply instantly the vacancy of Canterbury; and for that purpose he sent for Anselm, a Piedmontese by birth, abbot of Bec in Normandy, who was much celebrated for his learning and piety. The abbot earnestly refused the dignity, fell on his knees, wept, and entreated the king to change his purpose [a]; and when he found the prince obstinate in forcing the pastoral staff upon him, he kept his fist so fast clenched, that it required the utmost violence of the bystanders to open it, and force him to receive that ensign of spiritual dignity [b]. William soon after recovered; and his passions regaining their wonted vigour, he returned to his former violence and rapine. He detained in prison several persons whom he had ordered to be freed during the time of his penitence; he still preyed upon the ecclesiastical benefices; the sale of spiritual dignities continued as open as ever; and he kept possession of a considerable part of the revenues belonging to the see of Canterbury [c]. But he found in Anselm

[z] Eadmer, p. 16. Chron. Sax. 198. [a] Eadmer, p. 17. Diceto, p. 494. [b] Eadmer, p. 18. [c] Eadmer, p. 19. 43. Chron. Sax. p. 199.

that

CHAP. V. 1096. that perfevering oppofition, which he had reafon to expect from the oftentatious humility which that prelate had difplayed in refufing his promotion.

The oppofition made by Anfelm was the more dangerous on account of the character of piety which he foon acquired in England, by his great zeal againft all abufes, particularly thofe in drefs and ornament. There was a mode, which, in that age, prevailed throughout Europe, both among men and women, to give an enormous length to their fhoes, to draw the toe to a fharp point, and to affix to it the figure of a bird's bill, or fome fuch ornament, which was turned upwards, and which was often fuftained by gold or filver chains tied to the knee [d]. The ecclefiaftics took exception at this ornament, which they faid was an attempt to bely the fcripture, where it is affirmed, that no man can add a cubit to his ftature; and they declaimed againft it with great vehemence, nay affembled fome fynods, who abfolutely condemned it. But, fuch are the ftrange contradictions in human nature! though the clergy, at that time, could overturn thrones, and had authority fufficient to fend above a million of men on *their* errand to the deferts of Afia, they could never prevail againft thefe long-pointed fhoes: On the contrary, that caprice, contrary to all other modes, maintained its ground during feveral centuries; and if the clergy had not at laft defifted from their perfecution of it, it might ftill have been the prevailing fafhion in Europe.

But Anfelm was more fortunate in decrying the particular mode which was the object of his averfion, and which probably had not taken fuch faft hold of the affections of the people. He preached zealoufly againft the long hair and curled locks which were then fafhionable among the courtiers; he refufed the afhes on Afh-Wednefday to thofe who were fo accou-

[d] Order. Vital. p. 682. W. Malmef. p. 123. Knyghton, p. 2369.

tred;

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tred; and his authority and eloquence had ſuch influence, that the young men univerſally abandoned that ornament, and appeared in the cropt hair, which was recommended to them by the ſermons of the primate. The noted hiſtorian of Anſelm, who was alſo his companion and ſecretary, celebrates highly this effort of his zeal and piety [e].

When William's profaneneſs therefore returned to him with his health, he was ſoon engaged in controverſies with this auſtere prelate. There was at that time a ſchiſm in the church between Urban and Clement, who both pretended to the papacy [f]; and Anſelm, who, as abbot of Bec, had already acknowledged the former, was determined, without the king's conſent, to introduce his authority into England [g]. William, who, imitating his father's example, had prohibited his ſubjects from recognizing any pope whom he had not previouſly received, was enraged at this attempt; and ſummoned a ſynod at Rockingham, with an intention of depoſing Anſelm: But the prelate's ſuffragans declared, that, without the papal authority, they knew of no expedient for inflicting that puniſhment on their primate [h]. The king was at laſt engaged by other motives to give the preference to Urban's title; Anſelm received the pall from that pontiff; and matters ſeemed to be accommodated between the king and the primate [i], when the quarrel broke out afreſh from a new cauſe. William had undertaken an expedition againſt Wales, and required the archbiſhop to furniſh his quota of ſoldiers for that ſervice; but Anſelm, who regarded the demand as an oppreſſion on the church, and yet durſt not refuſe compliance, ſent them ſo miſerably accoutred, that the king was extremely diſpleaſed, and threat-

[e] Eadmer, p. 23. [f] Hoveden, p. 463. [g] Eadmer, p. 29. M. Paris, p. 13. Diceto, p. 494. Spelm. Conc. vol. ii. p. 16.
[h] Eadmer, p. 30. [i] Diceto, p. 495.

ened

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ened him with a prosecution [k]. Anselm, on the other hand, demanded positively that all the revenues of his see should be restored to him; appealed to Rome against the king's injustice [l]; and affairs came to such extremities, that the primate, finding it dangerous to remain in the kingdom, desired and obtained the king's permission to retire beyond sea. All his temporalities were seized [m]; but he was received with great respect by Urban, who considered him as a martyr in the cause of religion, and even menaced the king, on account of his proceedings against the primate and the church, with the sentence of excommunication. Anselm assisted at the council of Bari, where, besides fixing the controversy between the Greek and Latin churches concerning the procession of the Holy Ghost [n], the right of election to church preferments was declared to belong to the clergy alone, and spiritual censures were denounced against all ecclesiastics, who did homage to laymen for their sees or benefices, and against all laymen who exacted it [o]. The rite of homage, by the feudal customs, was, that the vassal should throw himself on his knees, should put his joined hands between those of his superior, and should in that posture swear fealty to him [p]. But the council declared it execrable, that pure hands, which could create God, and could offer him up as a sacrifice for the salvation of mankind, should be put, after this humiliating manner, between profane hands, which, besides being enured to rapine and bloodshed, were employed day and night in impure purposes, and obscene contacts [q]. Such were the reasonings prevalent in that age; reasonings which, though they cannot be passed over in silence, with-

k Eadmer, p. 37. 43. l Ibid. p. 40. m M. Paris, p. 13. Parker, p. 178. n Eadmer, p. 49. M. Paris, p. 13. Sim. Dun. p. 224. o M. Paris, p 14. p Spelman, Du Cange, in verb. *Homagium*. q W. Heming. p. 467. Flor. Wigorn. p. 649. Sim. Dunelm. p. 224. Brompton, p. 994.

out

out omitting the moſt curious, and, perhaps not the least inſtructive part of hiſtory, can ſcarcely be delivered with the requiſite decency and gravity. CHAP. V. 1097.

THE ceſſion of Normandy and Maine by duke Robert increaſed the king's territories; but brought him no great increaſe of power, becauſe of the unſettled ſtate of thoſe countries, the mutinous diſpoſition of the barons, and the vicinity of the French king, who ſupported them in all their inſurrections. Even Helie, lord of la Fleche, a ſmall town in Anjou, was able to give him inquietude; and this great monarch was obliged to make ſeveral expeditions abroad, without being able to prevail over ſo petty a baron, who had acquired the confidence and affections of the inhabitants of Maine. He was, however, ſo fortunate as at laſt to take him priſoner in a rencounter; but having releaſed him, at the interceſſion of the French king and the count of Anjou, he found the province of Maine ſtill expoſed to his intrigues and incurſions. Helie, being introduced by the citizens into the town of Mans, beſieged the garriſon in the citadel: William, who 1099.
was hunting in the new foreſt, when he received intelligence of this hoſtile attempt, was ſo provoked, that he immediately turned his horſe, and galloped to the ſea-ſhore at Dartmouth; declaring, that he would not ſtop a moment till he had taken vengeance for the offence. He found the weather ſo cloudy and tempeſtuous, that the mariners thought it dangerous to put to ſea: But the king hurried on board, and ordered them to ſet ſail inſtantly; telling them, that they never yet heard of a king that was drowned[r]. By this vigour and celerity, he delivered the citadel of Mans from its preſent danger; and purſuing Helie into his own territories, he laid ſiege to Majol, a ſmall caſtle in thoſe parts: But a wound, which he received before this place, 1100.

[r] W. Malm. p. 124. H. Hunt. p. 378. M. Paris, p. 36. Ypod. Neuſt. p. 442.

CHAP. V. 1100. obliged him to raise the siege; and he returned to England.

THE weakness of the greatest monarchs, during this age, in their military expeditions against their nearest neighbours, appears the more surprising, when we consider the prodigious numbers, which even petty princes, seconding the enthusiastic rage of the people, were able to assemble, and to conduct in dangerous enterprises to the remote provinces of Asia. William, earl of Poitiers and duke of Guienne, enflamed with the glory, and not discouraged by the misfortunes, which had attended the former adventurers in the crusades, had put himself at the head of an immense multitude, computed by some historians to amount to 60,000 horse, and a much greater number of foot [s], and he purposed to lead them into the Holy Land against the infidels. He wanted money to forward the preparations requisite for this expedition, and he offered to mortgage all his dominions to William, without entertaining any scruple on account of that rapacious and iniquitous hand, to which he resolved to consign them [t]. The king accepted the offer; and had prepared a fleet and an army, in order to escort the money, and take possession of the rich provinces of Guienne and Poictou; when an accident put an end to his life, and to all his ambitious projects. He was engaged in hunting, the sole amusement, and indeed the chief occupation of princes in those rude times, when society was little cultivated, and the arts afforded few objects worthy of attention. Walter Tyrrel, a French gentleman, remarkable for his address in archery, attended him in this recreation, of which the new forest was the scene; and as William had dismounted after a chase, Tyrrel, impatient to show his dexterity, let fly an arrow at a stag, which suddenly started be-

2d August.

[s] W. Malm. p. 149. The whole is said by Order. Vital. p. 789. to amount to 300,000 men. [t] W. Malmes. p. 127.

fore him. The arrow, glancing from a tree, ſtruck the king in the breaſt, and inſtantly ſlew him [u]; while Tyrrel, without informing any one of the accident, put ſpurs to his horſe, haſtened to the ſea-ſhore, embarked for France, and joined the cruſade in an expedition to Jeruſalem; a penance which he impoſed on himſelf for this involuntary crime. The body of William was found in the foreſt by the country people, and was buried without any pomp or ceremony at Wincheſter. His courtiers were negligent in performing the laſt duties to a maſter who was ſo little beloved; and every one was too much occupied in the intereſting object of fixing his ſucceſſor, to attend the funeral of a dead ſovereign.

CHAP. V. 1100. Death and character of William Rufus.

THE memory of this monarch is tranſmitted to us with little advantage by the churchmen, whom he had offended; and though we may ſuſpect, in general, that their account of his vices is ſomewhat exaggerated, his conduct affords little reaſon for contradicting the character which they have aſſigned him, or for attributing to him any very eſtimable qualities. He ſeems to have been a violent and tyrannical prince; a perfidious, encroaching, and dangerous neighbour; an unkind and ungenerous relation. He was equally prodigal and rapacious in the management of his treaſury; and if he poſſeſſed abilities, he lay ſo much under the government of impetuous paſſions, that he made little uſe of them in his adminiſtration; and he indulged, without reſerve, that domineering policy, which ſuited his temper, and which, if ſupported, as it was in him, with courage and vigour, proves often more ſucceſſful in diſorderly times, than the deepeſt foreſight and moſt refined artifice.

THE monuments which remain of this prince in England, are the Tower, Weſtminſter-hall, and

[u] W. Malm. p. 126. H. Hunt. p. 378. M. Paris, p. 37. Petr. Bleſ. p. 110.

CHAP. V. 1100. London-bridge, which he built. The most laudable foreign enterprise which he undertook, was the sending of Edgar Atheling, three years before his death, into Scotland with a small army, to restore prince Edgar, the true heir of that kingdom, son of Malcolm, and of Margaret, sister of Edgar Atheling; and the enterprise proved successful. It was remarked in that age, that Richard, an elder brother of William's, perished by an accident in the new forest; Richard, his nephew, natural son of Duke Robert, lost his life in the same place, after the same manner: And all men, upon the king's fate, exclaimed, that, as the Conqueror had been guilty of extreme violence, impelling all the inhabitants of that large district to make room for his game, the just vengeance of Heaven was signalized, in the same place, by the slaughter of his posterity. William was killed in the thirteenth year of his reign, and about the fortieth of his age. As he was never married, he left no legitimate issue.

In the eleventh year of this reign, Magnus, king of Norway, made a descent on the isle of Anglesea, but was repulsed by Hugh, earl of Shrewsbury. This is the last attempt made by the northern nations upon England. That restless people seem about this time to have learned the practice of tillage, which thenceforth kept them at home, and freed the other nations of Europe from the devastations spread over them by those piratical invaders. This proved one great cause of the subsequent settlement and improvement of the southern nations.

CHAP. VI.

HENRY I.

The Crusades——Accession of Henry——Marriage of the king——Invasion by duke Robert——Accommodation with Robert——Attack of Normandy——Conquest of Normandy——Continuation of the quarrel with Anselm, the primate——Compromise with him——Wars abroad——Death of prince William——King's second marriage——Death——and character of Henry.

CHAP. VI.

1100. The crusades.

AFTER the adventurers in the holy war were assembled on the banks of the Bosphorus, opposite to Constantinople, they proceeded on their enterprise; but immediately experienced those difficulties which their zeal had hitherto concealed from them, and for which, even if they had foreseen them, it would have been almost impossible to provide a remedy. The Greek emperor, Alexis Comnenus, who had applied to the western Christians for succour against the Turks, entertained hopes, and those but feeble ones, of obtaining such a moderate supply, as, acting under his command, might enable him to repulse the enemy: But he was extremely astonished to see his dominions overwhelmed, on a sudden, by such an inundation of licentious barbarians, who, though they pretended friendship, despised his subjects as unwarlike, and detested them as heretical. By all the arts of policy, in which he excelled, he endeavoured to divert the torrent; but while he employed professions, caresses, civilities, and seeming services towards the leaders of the crusade, he secretly regarded those imperious

 allies

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allies as more dangerous than the open enemies by whom his empire had been formerly invaded. Having effected that difficult point of disembarking them safely in Asia, he entered into a private correspondence with Soliman, emperor of the Turks; and practised every insidious art, which his genius, his power, or his situation, enabled him to employ, for disappointing the enterprise, and discouraging the Latins from making thenceforward any such prodigious migrations. His dangerous policy was seconded by the disorders inseparable from so vast a multitude, who were not united under one head, and were conducted by leaders of the most independent intractable spirit, unacquainted with military discipline, and determined enemies to civil authority and submission. The scarcity of provisions, the excesses of fatigue, the influence of unknown climates, joined to the want of concert in their operations, and to the sword of a warlike enemy, destroyed the adventurers by thousands, and would have abated the ardour of men impelled to war by less powerful motives. Their zeal, however, their bravery, and their irresistible force, still carried them forward, and continually advanced them to the great end of their enterprise. After an obstinate siege they took Nice, the seat of the Turkish empire; they defeated Soliman in two great battles; they made themselves masters of Antioch; and entirely broke the force of the Turks, who had so long retained those countries in subjection. The soldan of Egypt, whose alliance they had hitherto courted, recovered, on the fall of the Turkish power, his former authority in Jerusalem; and he informed them by his ambassadors, that if they came disarmed to that city, they might now perform their religious vows, and that all Christian pilgrims, who should thenceforth visit the holy sepulchre, might expect the same good treatment which they had ever received from his predecessors.

The

The offer was rejected; the soldan was required to yield up the city to the Christians; and on his refusal, the champions of the cross advanced to the siege of Jerusalem, which they regarded as the consummation of their labours. By the detachments which they had made, and the disasters which they had undergone, they were diminished to the number of twenty thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse; but these were still formidable, from their valour, their experience, and the obedience which, from past calamities, they had learned to pay to their leaders. After a siege of five weeks, they took Jerusalem by assault; and, impelled by a mixture of military and religious rage, they put the numerous garrison and inhabitants to the sword without distinction. Neither arms defended the valiant, nor submission the timorous: No age or sex was spared: Infants on the breast were pierced by the same blow with their mothers, who implored for mercy: Even a multitude, to the number of ten thousand persons, who had surrendered themselves prisoners, and were promised quarter, were butchered in cool blood by those ferocious conquerors [w]. The streets of Jerusalem were covered with dead bodies [x]; and the triumphant warriors, after every enemy was subdued and slaughtered, immediately turned themselves, with the sentiments of humiliation and contrition towards the holy sepulchre. They threw aside their arms, still streaming with blood: They advanced with reclined bodies, and naked feet and heads, to that sacred monument: They sung anthems to their Saviour, who had there purchased their salvation by his death and agony: And their devotion, enlivened by the presence of the place where he had suffered, so overcame their fury, that they dissolved in tears, and bore the appearance of every soft and tender sentiment. So inconsistent is

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1100.

[w] Vertot, vol. i. p. 57.
[x] M. Paris, p. 34. Order. Vital. p. 756. Diceto, p. 498.

CHAP. VI. 1100. human nature with itself! and so easily does the most effeminate superstition ally, both with the most heroic courage and with the fiercest barbarity!

This great event happened on the fifth of July in the last year of the eleventh century. The Christian princes and nobles, after chusing Godfrey of Boüillon king of Jerusalem, began to settle themselves in their new conquests; while some of them returned to Europe, in order to enjoy at home that glory, which their valour had acquired them in this popular and meritorious enterprise. Among these was Robert duke of Normandy, who, as he had relinquished the greatest dominions of any prince that attended the crusade, had all along distinguished himself by the most intrepid courage, as well as by that affable disposition and unbounded generosity which gain the hearts of soldiers, and qualify a prince to shine in a military life. In passing through Italy, he became acquainted with Sibylla, daughter of the count of Conversana, a young lady of great beauty and merit, whom he espoused: Indulging himself in this new passion, as well as fond of enjoying ease and pleasure, after the fatigues of so many rough campaigns, he lingered a twelvemonth in that delicious climate; and though his friends in the north looked every moment for his arrival, none of them knew when they could with certainty expect it. By this delay he lost the kingdom of England, which the great fame he had acquired during the crusades, as well as his undoubted title, both by birth and by the preceding agreement with his deceased brother, would, had he been present, have infallibly secured to him.

Accession of Henry.

Prince Henry was hunting with Rufus in the new forest, when intelligence of that monarch's death was brought him; and being sensible of the advantage attending the conjuncture, he hurried to Winchester, in order to secure the royal treasure, which he knew to be a necessary implement for facilitating

cilitating his designs on the crown. He had scarcely reached the place when William de Breteüil, keeper of the treasure, arrived, and opposed himself to Henry's pretensions. This nobleman, who had been engaged in the same party of hunting, had no sooner heard of his master's death, than he hastened to take care of his charge; and he told the prince, that this treasure, as well as the crown, belonged to his elder brother, who was now his sovereign; and that he himself, for his part, was determined, in spite of all other pretensions, to maintain his allegiance to him. But Henry, drawing his sword, threatened him with instant death if he dared to disobey him; and as others of the late king's retinue, who came every moment to Winchester, joined the prince's party, Breteüil was obliged to withdraw his opposition, and to acquiesce in this violence [y].

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HENRY, without losing a moment, hastened with the money to London; and having assembled some noblemen and prelates, whom his address, or abilities, or presents, gained to his side, he was suddenly elected, or rather saluted king; and immediately proceeded to the exercise of royal authority. In less than three days after his brother's death, the ceremony of his coronation was performed by Maurice bishop of London, who was persuaded to officiate on that occasion [z]; and thus, by his courage and celerity, he intruded himself into the vacant throne. No one had sufficient spirit or sense of duty to appear in defence of the absent prince: All men were seduced or intimidated: Present possession supplied the apparent defects in Henry's title, which was indeed founded on plain usurpation: And the barons, as well as the people, acquiesced in a claim, which, though it could neither be justified nor comprehended, could now, they found, be opposed through the perils alone of civil war and rebellion.

[y] Order. Vital. p. 782.
[z] Chron. Sax. p. 208. Order. Vital. p. 783.

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But as Henry foresaw that a crown, usurped against all rules of justice, would sit unsteady on his head, he resolved, by fair professions at least, to gain the affections of all his subjects. Besides taking the usual coronation oath to maintain the laws and execute justice, he passed a charter, which was calculated to remedy many of the grievous oppressions which had been complained of during the reigns of his father and brother[a]. He there promised, that, at the death of any bishop or abbot, he never would seize the revenues of the see or abbey during the vacancy, but would leave the whole to be reaped by the successor; and that he would never let to farm any ecclesiastical benefice, nor dispose of it for money. After this concession to the church, whose favour was of so great importance, he proceeded to enumerate the civil grievances which he purposed to redress. He promised that, upon the death of any earl, baron, or military tenant, his heir should be admitted to the possession of his estate, on paying a just and lawful relief; without being exposed to such violent exactions as had been usual during the late reigns: He remitted the wardship of minors, and allowed guardians to be appointed, who should be answerable for the trust: He promised not to dispose of any heiress in marriage, but by the advice of all the barons; and if any baron intended to give his daughter, sister, niece, or kinswoman in marriage, it should only be necessary for him to consult the king, who promised to take no money for his consent, nor ever to refuse permission, unless the person, to whom it was purposed to marry her, should happen to be his enemy: He granted his barons and military tenants the power of bequeathing, by will, their money or personal estates; and if they neglected to make a

[a] Chron. Sax. p. 208. Sim. Dunelm. p. 225.

will,

will, he promised that their heirs should succeed to them: He renounced the right of imposing moneyage, and of levying taxes at pleasure on the farms which the barons retained in their own hands [b]: He made some general professions of moderating fines; he offered a pardon for all offences; and he remitted all debts due to the crown: He required that the vassals of the barons should enjoy the same privileges which he granted to his own barons; and he promised a general confirmation and observance of the laws of king Edward. This is the substance of the chief articles contained in that famous charter [c].

To give greater authenticity to these concessions, Henry lodged a copy of his charter in some abbey of each county; as if desirous that it should be exposed to the view of all his subjects, and remain a perpetual rule for the limitation and direction of his government: Yet it is certain that, after the present purpose was served, he never once thought, during his reign, of observing one single article of it; and the whole fell so much into neglect and oblivion, that, in the following century, when the barons, who had heard an obscure tradition of it, desired to make it the model of the great charter which they exacted from king John, they could with difficulty find a copy of it in the kingdom. But as to the grievances here meant to be redressed, they were still continued in their full extent; and the royal authority, in all those particulars, lay under no manner of restriction. Reliefs of heirs, so capital an article, were never effectually fixed till the time of Magna Charta [d]; and it is evident that the general promise here given, of accepting a just

[b] See Appendix II. [c] Matth. Paris, p. 38. Hoveden, p. 468. Brompton, p. 1021. Hagulstad, p. 310. [d] Glanv. lib. 2. cap. 36. What is called a relief in the Conqueror's laws, preserved by Ingulf, seems to have been the heriot; since reliefs, as well as the other burdens of the feudal law, were unknown in the age of the Confessor, whose laws these originally were.

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and lawful relief, ought to have been reduced to more precision, in order to give security to the subject. The oppression of wardship and marriage was perpetuated even till the reign of Charles II.: And it appears from Glanville[e], the famous justiciary of Henry II. that, in his time, where any man died intestate, an accident which must have been very frequent when the art of writing was so little known, the king, or the lord of the fief, pretended to seize all the moveables, and to exclude every heir, even the children of the deceased: A sure mark of a tyrannical and arbitrary government.

The Normans, indeed, who domineered in England, were, during this age, so licentious a people, that they may be pronounced incapable of any true or regular liberty; which requires such improvement in knowledge and morals as can only be the result of reflection and experience, and must grow to perfection during several ages of settled and established government. A people so insensible to the rights of their sovereign as to disjoint, without necessity, the hereditary succession, and permit a younger brother to intrude himself into the place of the elder, whom they esteemed, and who was guilty of no crime but being absent, could not expect that that prince would pay any greater regard to their privileges, or allow his engagements to fetter his power, and debar him from any considerable interest or convenience. They had indeed arms in their hands, which prevented the establishment of a total despotism, and left their posterity sufficient power, whenever they should attain a sufficient degree of reason, to assume true liberty: But their turbulent disposition frequently prompted them to make such use of their arms, that they were more

[e] Lib. 7. cap. 16. This practice was contrary to the laws of king Edward, ratified by the Conqueror, as we learn from Ingulf, p. 91. But laws had at that time very little influence: Power and violence governed every thing.

fitted

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fitted to obstruct the execution of justice, than to stop the career of violence and oppression. The prince, finding that greater opposition was often made to him when he enforced the laws than when he violated them, was apt to render his own will and pleasure the sole rule of government; and, on every emergence, to consider more the power of the persons whom he might offend, than the rights of those whom he might injure. The very form of this charter of Henry proves that the Norman barons (for they, rather than the people of England, were chiefly concerned in it) were totally ignorant of the nature of limited monarchy, and were ill qualified to conduct, in conjunction with their sovereign, the machine of government. It is an act of his sole power, is the result of his free grace, contains some articles which bind others as well as himself, and is therefore unfit to be the deed of any one who possesses not the whole legislative power, and who may not at pleasure revoke all his concessions.

HENRY, farther, to increase his popularity, degraded and committed to prison Ralph Flambard, bishop of Durham, who had been the chief instrument of oppression under his brother [f]: But this act was followed by another, which was a direct violation of his own charter, and was a bad prognostic of his sincere intentions to observe it: He kept the see of Durham vacant for five years, and during that time retained possession of all its revenues. Sensible of the great authority which Anselm had acquired by his character of piety, and by the persecutions which he had undergone from William, he sent repeated messages to him at Lyons, where he resided, and invited him to return and take possession of his dignities [g]. On the arrival of the prelate, he proposed to him the renewal of that homage

[f] Chron. Sax. p. 208. W. Malm. p. 156. Matth. Paris, p. 39. Alur. Beverl. p. 144. [g] Chron. Sax. p. 208. Order. Vital. p. 783. Matth. Paris, p. 39. T. Rudborne, p. 273.

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which he had done his brother, and which had never been refused by any English bishop: But Anselm had acquired other sentiments by his journey to Rome, and gave the king an absolute refusal. He objected the decrees of the council of Bari, at which he himself had assisted; and he declared, that so far from doing homage for his spiritual dignity, he would not so much as communicate with any ecclesiastic who paid that submission, or who accepted of investitures from laymen. Henry, who expected, in his present delicate situation, to reap great advantages from the authority and popularity of Anselm, durst not insist on his demand [g]: He only desired that the controversy might be suspended; and that messengers might be sent to Rome, in order to accommodate matters with the pope, and obtain his confirmation of the laws and customs of England.

Marriage of the king.

THERE immediately occurred an important affair, in which the king was obliged to have recourse to the authority of Anselm. Matilda, daughter of Malcolm III. king of Scotland, and niece to Edgar Atheling, had, on her father's death, and the subsequent revolutions in the Scottish government, been brought to England, and educated under her aunt Christina, in the nunnery of Rumsey. This princess Henry purposed to marry; but as she had worn the veil, though never taken the vows, doubts might arise concerning the lawfulness of the act; and it behoved him to be very careful not to shock, in any particular, the religious prejudices of his subjects. The affair was examined by Anselm, in a council of the prelates and nobles which was summoned at Lambeth: Matilda there proved that she had put on the veil, not with a view of entering into a religious life, but merely in consequence of a custom familiar to the English ladies who protected

[g] W. Malm. p. 225.

their

their chastity from the brutal violence of the Normans, by taking shelter under that habit [h], which, amidst the horrible licentiousness of the times, was yet generally revered. The council, sensible that even a princess had otherwise no security for her honour, admitted this reason as valid: They pronounced that Matilda was still free to marry [i]; and her espousals with Henry were celebrated by Anselm with great pomp and solemnity [k]. No act of the king's reign rendered him equally popular with his English subjects, and tended more to establish him on the throne. Though Matilda, during the life of her uncle and brothers, was not heir of the Saxon line, she was become very dear to the English on account of her connexions with it: And that people, who before the conquest had fallen into a kind of indifference towards their ancient royal family, had felt so severely the tyranny of the Normans, that they reflected with extreme regret on their former liberty, and hoped for a more equal and mild administration, when the blood of their native princes should be mingled with that of their new sovereigns [l].

CHAP. VI. 1100.

But the policy and prudence of Henry, which, if time had been allowed for these virtues to produce their full effect, would have secured him possession of the crown, ran great hazard of being frustrated by the sudden appearance of Robert, who returned to Normandy about a month after the death of his brother William. He took possession, without opposition, of that dutchy; and immediately made preparations for recovering England, of which, during his absence, he had, by Henry's intrigues, been so unjustly defrauded. The great fame which he had acquired in the East forwarded his pretensions; and the Norman barons, sensible of the consequences, expressed the same discontent at the se-

Invasion by duke Robert.

1101.

[h] Eadmer, p. 57. [i] Ibid. [k] Hoveden, p. 468.
[l] M. Paris, p. 40.

paration

CHAP. VI. 1101. paration of the dutchy and kingdom, which had appeared on the acceſſion of William. Robert de Beleſme earl of Shrewſbury and Arundel, William de la Warrenne earl of Surrey, Arnulf de Montgomery, Walter Giffard, Robert de Pontefract, Robert de Mallet, Yvo de Grentmeſnil, and many others of the principal nobility [m], invited Robert to make an attempt upon England, and promiſed, on his landing, to join him with all their forces. Even the ſeamen were affected with the general popularity of his name, and they carried over to him the greater part of a fleet which had been equipped to oppoſe his paſſage. Henry, in this extremity, began to be apprehenſive for his life, as well as for his crown; and had recourſe to the ſuperſtition of the people, in order to oppoſe their ſentiment of juſtice. He paid diligent court to Anſelm, whoſe ſanctity and wiſdom he pretended to revere. He conſulted him in all difficult emergencies; ſeemed to be governed by him in every meaſure; promiſed a ſtrict regard to eccleſiaſtical privileges; profeſſed a great attachment to Rome, and a reſolution of perſevering in an implicit obedience to the decrees of councils and to the will of the ſovereign pontiff. By theſe careſſes and declarations he entirely gained the confidence of the primate, whoſe influence over the people, and authority with the barons, were of the utmoſt ſervice to him in his preſent ſituation. Anſelm ſcrupled not to aſſure the nobles of the king's ſincerity in thoſe profeſſions which he made, of avoiding the tyrannical and oppreſſive government of his father and brother: He even rode through the ranks of the army, recommended to the ſoldiers the defence of their prince, repreſented the duty of keeping their oaths of allegiance, and prognoſticated to them the greateſt happineſs from the government of ſo wiſe and juſt a ſovereign. By

[m] Order. Vital. p. 785.

this

this expedient, joined to the influence of the earls of Warwic and Mellent, of Roger Bigod, Richard de Redvers, and Robert Fitz-Hamon, powerful barons, who ſtill adhered to the preſent government, the army was retained in the king's intereſts, and marched, with ſeeming union and firmneſs, to oppoſe Robert, who had landed with his forces at Portſmouth.

CHAP. VI. 1101.

THE two armies lay in ſight of each other for ſome days without coming to action; and both princes, being apprehenſive of the event, which would probably be deciſive, hearkened the more willingly to the councils of Anſelm and the other great men, who mediated an accommodation between them. After employing ſome negociation, it was agreed that Robert ſhould reſign his pretenſions to England, and receive in lieu of them an annual penſion of 3000 marks; that if either of the princes died without iſſue, the other ſhould ſucceed to his dominions; that the adherents of each ſhould be pardoned, and reſtored to all their poſſeſſions either in Normandy or England; and that neither Robert nor Henry ſhould thenceforth encourage, receive, or protect the enemies of the other[n].

Accommodation with Robert.

THIS treaty, though calculated ſo much for Henry's advantage, he was the firſt to violate. He reſtored indeed the eſtates of all Robert's adherents; but was ſecretly determined, that noblemen ſo powerful and ſo ill affected, who had both inclination and ability to diſturb his government, ſhould not long remain unmoleſted in their preſent opulence and grandeur. He began with the earl of Shrewſbury, who was watched for ſome time by ſpies, and then indicted on a charge, conſiſting of forty-five articles. This turbulent nobleman, knowing his own guilt, as well as the prejudices of his

1102.

[n] Chron. Sax. p. 209. W. Malmeſ. p. 156.

CHAP. VI. 1102. judges and the power of his prosecutor, had recourse to arms for defence: But being soon suppressed by the activity and address of Henry, he was banished the kingdom, and his great estate was confiscated. His ruin involved that of his two brothers, Arnulf de Montgomery, and Roger earl of Lancaster. Soon after followed the prosecution and condemnation of Robert de Pontefract and Robert de Mallet, who had distinguished themselves among Robert's adherents. William de Warenne
1103. was the next victim: Even William earl of Cornwal, son of the earl of Mortaigne, the king's uncle, having given matter of suspicion against him, lost all the vast acquisitions of his family in England. Though the usual violence and tyranny of the Norman barons afforded a plausible pretence for those prosecutions, and it is probable that none of the sentences pronounced against these noblemen was wholly iniquitous; men easily saw, or conjectured, that the chief part of their guilt was not the injustice or illegality of their conduct. Robert, enraged at the fate of his friends, imprudently ventured to come into England; and he remonstrated with his brother, in severe terms, against this breach of treaty: But met with so bad a reception, that he began to apprehend danger to his own liberty, and was glad to purchase an escape, by resigning his pension.

The indiscretion of Robert soon exposed him to more fatal injuries. This prince, whose bravery and candour procured him respect while at a distance, had no sooner attained the possession of power and enjoyment of peace, than all the vigour of his mind relaxed; and he fell into contempt among those who approached his person, or were subject to his authority. Alternately abandoned to dissolute pleasures and to womanish superstition, he was so remiss, both in the care of his treasure, and the exercise of his government, that his servants

pillaged his money with impunity, ſtole from him his very clothes, and proceeded thence to practiſe every ſpecies of extortion on his defenceleſs ſubjects. The barons, whom a ſevere adminiſtration alone could have reſtrained, gave reins to their unbounded rapine upon their vaſſals, and inveterate animoſities againſt each other; and all Normandy, during the reign of this benign prince, was become a ſcene of violence and depredation. The Normans at laſt, obſerving the regular government which Henry, notwithſtanding his uſurped title, had been able to eſtabliſh in England, applied to him, that he might uſe his authority for the ſuppreſſion of theſe diſorders; and they thereby afforded him a pretence for interpoſing in the affairs of Normandy. Inſtead of employing his mediation to render his brother's government reſpectable, or to redreſs the grievances of the Normans; he was only attentive to ſupport his own partiſans, and to increaſe their number by every art of bribery, intrigue, and inſinuation. Having found, in a viſit which he made to that dutchy, that the nobility were more diſpoſed to pay ſubmiſſion to him than to their legal ſovereign, he collected, by arbitrary extortions on England, a great army and treaſure, and returned next year to Normandy, in a ſituation to obtain, either by violence or corruption, the dominion of that province. He took Bayeux by ſtorm after an obſtinate ſiege: He made himſelf maſter of Caen by the voluntary ſubmiſſion of the inhabitants: But being repulſed at Falaiſe, and obliged by the winter ſeaſon to raiſe the ſiege, he returned into England; after giving aſſurances to his adherents that he would perſevere in ſupporting and protecting them.

CHAP. VI. 1103. Attack of Normandy. 1105.

NEXT year he opened the campaign with the ſiege of Tenchebray; and it became evident, from his preparations and progreſs, that he intended to uſurp the entire poſſeſſion of Normandy. Robert was at

1106. Conqueſt of Normandy.

CHAP. VI. 1106.

last roused from his lethargy; and being supported by the earl of Mortaigne and Robert de Bellesme, the king's inveterate enemies, he raised a considerable army, and approached his brother's camp, with a view of finishing, in one decisive battle, the quarrel between them. He was now entered on that scene of action in which alone he was qualified to excel; and he so animated his troops by his example that they threw the English into disorder, and had nearly obtained the victory [o]; when the flight of Bellesme spread a panic among the Normans, and occasioned their total defeat. Henry, besides doing great execution on the enemy, made near ten thousand prisoners; among whom was duke Robert himself, and all the most considerable barons who adhered to his interests [p]. This victory was followed by the final reduction of Normandy: Roüen immediately submitted to the conqueror: Falaise, after some negociation, opened its gates; and by this acquisition, besides rendering himself master of an important fortress, he got into his hands prince William, the only son of Robert: He assembled the states of Normandy; and having received the homage of all the vassals of the dutchy, having settled the government, revoked his brother's donations, and dismantled the castles lately built, he returned into England, and carried along with him the duke as prisoner. That unfortunate prince was detained in custody during the remainder of his life, which was no less than twenty-eight years, and he died in the castle of Cardiff in Glamorganshire; happy if, without losing his liberty, he could have relinquished that power which he was not qualified either to hold or exercise. Prince William was committed to the care of Helie de St. Saen, who had married Robert's natural daughter, and who being a man of probity

[o] H. Hunt. p. 379. M. Paris, p. 43. Brompton, p. 1002.
[p] Eadmer, p. 90. Chron. Sax. p. 214. Order. Vital. p. 821.

and

and honour beyond what was uſual in thoſe ages, executed the truſt with great affection and fidelity. Edgar Atheling, who had followed Robert in the expedition to Jeruſalem, and who had lived with him ever ſince in Normandy, was another illuſtrious priſoner taken in the battle of Tenchebray [q]. Henry gave him his liberty, and ſettled a ſmall penſion on him, with which he retired; and he lived to a good old age in England, totally neglected and forgotten. This prince was diſtinguiſhed by perſonal bravery: But nothing can be a ſtronger proof of his mean talents in every other reſpect, than that, notwithſtanding he poſſeſſed the affections of the Engliſh, and enjoyed the only legal title to the throne, he was allowed, during the reigns of ſo many violent and jealous uſurpers, to live unmoleſted, and go to his grave in peace.

CHAP. VI. 1106.

1107. Continuation of the quarrel with Anſelm the primate.

A LITTLE after Henry had completed the conqueſt of Normandy, and ſettled the government of that province, he finiſhed a controverſy, which had been long depending between him and the pope, with regard to the inveſtitures in eccleſiaſtical benefices; and though he was here obliged to relinquiſh ſome of the ancient rights of the crown, he extricated himſelf from the difficulty on eaſier terms than moſt princes, who in that age were ſo unhappy as to be engaged in diſputes with the apoſtolic ſee. The king's ſituation, in the beginning of his reign, obliged him to pay great court to Anſelm: The advantages which he had reaped from the zealous friendſhip of that prelate, had made him ſenſible how prone the minds of his people were to ſuperſtition, and what an aſcendant the eccleſiaſtics had been able to aſſume over them. He had ſeen, on the acceſſion of his brother Rufus, that though the rights of primogeniture were then violated, and the inclinations of al-

[q] Chron. Sax. p. 214. Ann. Waverl. p. 144.

CHAP. VI. 1107. most all the barons thwarted, yet the authority of Lanfranc, the primate, had prevailed over all other considerations: His own case, which was still more unfavourable, afforded an instance in which the clergy had more evidently shewn their influence and authority. These recent examples, while they made him cautious not to offend that powerful body, convinced him, at the same time, that it was extremely his interest to retain the former prerogative of the crown in filling offices of such vast importance, and to check the ecclesiastics in that independence to which they visibly aspired. The choice which his brother, in a fit of penitence, had made of Anselm, was so far unfortunate to the king's pretensions, that this prelate was celebrated for his piety and zeal, and austerity of manners; and though his monkish devotion, and narrow principles, prognosticated no great knowledge of the world or depth of policy, he was, on that very account, a more dangerous instrument in the hands of politicians, and retained a greater ascendant over the bigoted populace. The prudence and temper of the king appear in nothing more conspicuous than in the management of this delicate affair; where he was always sensible that it had become necessary for him to risque his whole crown, in order to preserve the most invaluable jewel of it [p].

Anselm had no sooner returned from banishment, than his refusal to do homage to the king raised a dispute, which Henry evaded at that critical juncture, by promising to send a messenger, in order to compound the matter with Pascal II. who then filled the papal throne. The messenger, as was probably foreseen, returned with an absolute refusal of the king's demands [q]; and that fortified by many reasons, which were well qualified to operate on the understandings of men in those ages.

[p] Eadmer, p. 56. [q] W. Malm. p. 225.

Pascal quoted the scriptures to prove that Christ was the door; and he thence inferred, that all ecclesiastics must enter into the church through Christ alone, not through the civil magistrates, or any profane laymen [r]. "It is monstrous," added the pontiff, "that a son "should pretend to beget his father, or a man to "create his God: Priests are called gods in scrip- "ture, as being the vicars of God: And will you "by your abominable pretensions to grant them "their investiture, assume the right of creating "them [s]?"

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But how convincing soever these arguments, they could not persuade Henry to resign so important a prerogative; and, perhaps, as he was possessed of great reflection and learning, he thought that the absurdity of a man's creating his God, even allowing priests to be gods, was not urged with the best grace by the Roman pontiff. But as he desired still to avoid, at least to delay, the coming to any dangerous extremity with the church, he persuaded Anselm, that he should be able, by farther negotiation, to attain some composition with Pascal; and for that purpose he dispatched three bishops to Rome, while Anselm sent two messengers of his own, to be more fully assured of the pope's intentions [t]. Pascal wrote back letters equally positive and arrogant, both to the king and primate; urging to the former, that by assuming the right of investitures, he committed a kind of spiritual adultery with the church, who was the spouse of Christ, and who must not admit of such a commerce with any other person [u]; and insisting with the latter, that the pretension of kings to confer benefices was

[r] Eadmer, p. 60. This topic is further enforced in p. 73, 74. See also W. Malm. p. 163.

[s] Eadmer, p. 61. I much suspect, that this text of scripture is a forgery of his holiness: For I have not been able to find it. Yet it passed current in those ages, and was often quoted by the clergy as the foundation of their power. See Epist. St. Thom. p. 169.

[t] Eadmer, p. 62. W. Malm. p. 225. [u] Eadmer, p. 63.

CHAP. VI. the ſource of all ſimony; a topic which had but too much foundation in thoſe ages [w].

1107. HENRY had now no other expedient than to ſuppreſs the letter addreſſed to himſelf, and to perſuade the three biſhops to prevaricate, and aſſert upon their epiſcopal faith, that Paſcal had aſſured them in private of his good intentions towards Henry, and of his reſolution not to reſent any future exertion of his prerogative in granting inveſtitures; though he himſelf ſcrupled to give this aſſurance under his hand, leſt other princes ſhould copy the example, and aſſume a like privilege [x]. Anſelm's two meſſengers, who were monks, affirmed to him, that it was impoſſible this ſtory could have any foundation: But their word was not deemed equal to that of three biſhops; and the king, as if he had finally gained his cauſe, proceeded to fill the ſees of Hereford and Saliſbury, and to inveſt the new biſhops in the uſual manner [y]. But Anſelm, who, as he had good reaſon, gave no credit to the aſſeveration of the king's meſſengers, refuſed not only to conſecrate them, but even to communicate with them; and the biſhops themſelves, finding how odious they were become, returned to Henry the enſigns of their dignity. The quarrel every day increaſed between the king and the primate: The former, notwithſtanding the prudence and moderation of his temper, threw out menaces againſt ſuch as ſhould pretend to oppoſe him in exerting the ancient prerogatives of his crown: And Anſelm, ſenſible of his own dangerous ſituation, deſired leave to make a journey to Rome, in order to lay the caſe before the ſovereign pontiff. Henry, well pleaſed to rid himſelf, without violence, of ſo inflexible an antagoniſt, readily granted him permiſſion. The prelate was attended to the ſhore by in-

[w] Eadmer, p. 64. 66. [x] Eadmer, p. 65. W. Malm. p. 225.
[y] Eadmer, p. 66. W. Malm. p. 225. Hoveden, p. 469. Sim. Dunelm. p. 228.

finite

finite multitudes, not only of monks and clergymen, but people of all ranks, who ſcrupled not in this manner to declare for their primate againſt their ſovereign, and who regarded his departure as the final abolition of religion and true piety in the kingdom [z]. The king, however, ſeized all the revenues of his ſee; and ſent William de Warelwaſt to negotiate with Paſcal, and to find ſome means of accommodation in this delicate affair. 1107.

THE Engliſh miniſter told Paſcal, that his maſter would rather loſe his crown, than part with the right of granting inveſtitures. "And I," replied Paſcal, "would rather loſe my head than allow him to retain it [a]." Henry ſecretly prohibited Anſelm from returning, unleſs he reſolved to conform himſelf to the laws and uſages of the kingdom; and the primate took up his reſidence at Lyons, in expectation that the king would at laſt be obliged to yield the point which was the preſent object of controverſy between them. Soon after he was permitted to return to his monaſtery at Bec in Normandy; and Henry, beſides reſtoring to him the revenues of his ſee, treated him with the greateſt reſpect, and held ſeveral conferences with him, in order to ſoften his oppoſition, and bend him to ſubmiſſion [b]. The people of England, who thought all differences now accommodated, were inclined to blame their primate for abſenting himſelf ſo long from his charge; and he daily received letters from his partiſans, repreſenting the neceſſity of his ſpeedy return. The total extinction, they told him, of religion and Chriſtianity was likely to enſue from the want of his fatherly care: The moſt ſhocking cuſtoms prevail in England; and the dread of his ſeverity being now removed, ſodomy, and the practice of wearing long hair, gain ground among all ranks of men, and theſe enormities openly appear

[z] Eadmer, p. 71. [a] Eadmer, p. 73. W. Malm. p. 226. M. Paris, p. 40. [b] Hoveden, p. 471.

CHAP. VI. every where without ſenſe of ſhame or fear of puniſhment [c].

1107. THE policy of the court of Rome has commonly been much admired; and men, judging by ſucceſs, have beſtowed the higheſt eulogies on that prudence by which a power, from ſuch ſlender beginnings, could advance, without force of arms, to eſtabliſh an univerſal and almoſt abſolute monarchy in Europe. But the wiſdom of ſo long a ſucceſſion of men who filled the papal throne, and who were of ſuch different ages, tempers, and intereſts, is not intelligible, and could never have place in nature. The inſtrument, indeed, with which they wrought, the ignorance and ſuperſtition of the people, is ſo groſs an engine, of ſuch univerſal prevalence, and ſo little liable to accident or diſorder, that it may be ſucceſsful, even in the moſt unſkilful hands; and ſcarce any indiſcretion can fruſtrate its operations. While the court of Rome was openly abandoned to the moſt flagrant diſorders, even while it was torn with ſchiſms and factions, the power of the church daily made a ſenſible progreſs in Europe; and the temerity of Gregory and caution of Paſcal were equally fortunate in promoting it. The clergy, feeling the neceſſity which they lay under of being protected againſt the violence of princes, or rigour of the laws, were well pleaſed to adhere to a foreign head, who, being removed from the fear of the civil authority, could freely employ the power of the whole church, in defending her ancient or uſurped properties and privileges, when invaded in any particular country: The monks, deſirous of an independence on their dioceſans, profeſſed a ſtill more devoted attachment to the triple crown; and the ſtupid people poſſeſſed no ſcience or reaſon, which they could oppoſe to the moſt exorbitant pretenſions. Nonſenſe paſſed for demon-

[c] Eadmer, p. 81.

ſtration;

ſtration: The moſt criminal means were ſanctified by the piety of the end: Treaties were not ſuppoſed to be binding, where the intereſts of God were concerned: The ancient laws and cuſtoms of ſtates had no authority againſt a divine right: Impudent forgeries were received as authentic monuments of antiquity: And the champions of holy church, if ſucceſsful, were celebrated as heroes; if unfortunate, were worſhipped as martyrs; and all events thus turned out equally to the advantage of clerical uſurpations. Paſcal himſelf, the reigning pope, was, in the courſe of this very controverſy concerning inveſtitures, involved in circumſtances, and neceſſitated to follow a conduct, which would have drawn diſgrace and ruin on any temporal prince that had been ſo unfortunate as to fall into a like ſituation. His perſon was ſeized by the emperor Henry V. and he was obliged, by a formal treaty, to reſign to that monarch the right of granting inveſtitures, for which they had ſo long contended [d]. In order to add greater ſolemnity to this agreement, the emperor and pope communicated together on the ſame hoſte; one half of which was given to the prince, the other taken by the pontiff: The moſt tremendous imprecations were publickly denounced on either of them who ſhould violate the treaty: Yet no ſooner did Paſcal recover his liberty, than he revoked all his conceſſions, and pronounced the ſentence of excommunication againſt the emperor, who, in the end, was obliged to ſubmit to the terms required of him, and to yield up all his pretenſions, which he never could reſume [e].

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The king of England had very near fallen into the ſame dangerous ſituation: Paſcal had already excommunicated the earl of Mellent, and the other

[d] W. Malm. p. 167.

[e] Padre Paolo ſopra benef. eccleſ. p. 112. W. Malmeſ. p. 170. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 63. Sim. Dunelm. p. 233.

miniſters

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ministers of Henry, who were instrumental in supporting his pretensions[f]: He daily menaced the king himself with a like sentence; and he suspended the blow only to give him leisure to prevent it by a timely submission. The malcontents waited impatiently for the opportunity of disturbing his government by conspiracies and insurrections[g]: The king's best friends were anxious at the prospect of an incident which would set their religious and civil duties at variance: And the countess of Blois, his sister, a princess of piety, who had great influence over him, was affrightened with the danger of her brother's eternal damnation[h]. Henry, on the other hand, seemed determined to run all hazards, rather than resign a prerogative of such importance, which had been enjoyed by all his predecessors; and it seemed probable, from his great prudence and abilities, that he might be able to sustain his rights, and finally prevail in the contest. While Pascal and Henry thus stood mutually in awe of each other, it was the more easy to bring about an accommodation between them, and to find a medium in which they might agree.

Compromise with Anselm.

BEFORE bishops took possession of their dignities, they had formerly been accustomed to pass through two ceremonies: They received from the hands of the sovereign a ring and crozier, as symbols of their office; and this was called their *investiture*: They also made those submissions to the prince which were required of vassals by the rites of the feudal law, and which received the name of *homage*. And as the king might refuse both to grant the *investiture* and to receive the *homage*, though the chapter had, by some canons of the middle age, been endowed with the right of election, the sovereign had in reality the sole power of appointing prelates,

[f] Eadmer, p. 79. [g] Ibid. p. 80. [h] Ibid. p. 79.

Urban

Urban II. had equally deprived laymen of the rights of granting inveſtiture and of receiving homage [i]: The emperors never were able, by all their wars and negotiations, to make any diſtinction be admitted between them: The interpoſition of profane laymen, in any particular, was ſtill repreſented as impious and abominable: And the church openly aſpired to a total independence on the ſtate. But Henry had put England as well as Normandy in ſuch a ſituation, as gave greater weight to his negotiations; and Paſcal was for the preſent ſatisfied with his reſigning the right of granting inveſtitures, by which the ſpiritual dignity was ſuppoſed to be conferred; and he allowed the biſhops to do homage for their temporal properties and privileges [k]. The pontiff was well pleaſed to have made this acquiſition, which, he hoped, would in time involve the whole: And the king, anxious to procure an eſcape from a very dangerous ſituation, was content to retain ſome, though a more precarious authority, in the election of prelates. CHAP. VI. 1107.

AFTER the principal controverſy was accommodated, it was not difficult to adjuſt the other differences. The pope allowed Anſelm to communicate with the prelates who had already received inveſtitures from the crown; and he only required of them ſome ſubmiſſions for their paſt miſconduct [l]. He alſo granted Anſelm a plenary power of remedying every other diſorder, which, he ſaid, might ariſe from the barbarouſneſs of the country [m]. Such was the idea which the popes then entertained of the Engliſh; and nothing can be a ſtronger proof of the miſerable ignorance in which that people were then plunged, than that a man who ſat on the papal throne, and who ſubſiſted by abſurdities

[i] Eadmer, p. 91. W. Malm. p. 163. Sim. Dunelm. p. 230.
[k] Eadmer, p. 91. W. Malm. p. 164. 227. Hoveden, p. 471. M. Paris, p. 43. T. Rudb. p. 274. Brompton, p. 1000. Wilkins, p. 303. Chron. Dunſt. p. 21. [l] Eadmer, p. 87. [m] Ibid. p. 91.

and

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and nonſenſe, ſhould think himſelf entitled to treat them as barbarians.

DURING the courſe of theſe controverſies, a ſynod was held at Weſtminſter, where the king, intent only on the main diſpute, allowed ſome canons of leſs importance to be enacted, which tended to promote the uſurpations of the clergy. The celibacy of prieſts was enjoined, a point which it was ſtill found very difficult to carry into execution: And even laymen were not allowed to marry within the ſeventh degree of affinity [n]. By this contrivance the pope augmented the profits which he reaped from granting diſpenſations, and likewiſe thoſe from divorces; for as the art of writing was then rare, and pariſh regiſters were not regularly kept, it was not eaſy to aſcertain the degrees of affinity even among people of rank; and any man who had money ſufficient to pay for it, might obtain a divorce, on pretence that his wife was more nearly related to him than was permitted by the canons. The ſynod alſo paſſed a vote, prohibiting the laity from wearing long hair [o]. The averſion of the clergy to this mode was not confined to England. When the king went to Normandy, before he had conquered that province, the biſhop of Seez, in a formal harangue, earneſtly exhorted him to redreſs the manifold diſorders under which the government laboured, and to oblige the people to poll their hair in a decent form. Henry, though he would not reſign his prerogatives to the church, willingly parted with his hair: He cut it in the form which they required of him, and obliged all the courtiers to imitate his example [p].

Wars abroad.

THE acquiſition of Normandy was a great point of Henry's ambition; being the ancient patrimony of his family, and the only territory, which, while in his poſſeſſion, gave him any weight or conſider-

[n] Eadmer, p. 67, 68. Spelm. Conc. vol. ii. p. 22.
[o] Eadmer, p. 68.
[p] Order. Vital. p. 816.

ation

ation on the continent: But the injuſtice of his usurpation was the ſource of great inquietude, involved him in frequent wars, and obliged him to impoſe on his Engliſh ſubjects thoſe many heavy and arbitrary taxes, of which all the hiſtorians of that age unanimouſly complain [q]. His nephew William was but ſix years of age, when he committed him to the care of Helie de St. Saen; and it is probable, that his reaſon for entruſting that important charge to a man of ſo unblemiſhed a character, was to prevent all malignant ſuſpicions, in caſe any accident ſhould befal the life of the young prince. He ſoon repented of his choice; but when he deſired to recover poſſeſſion of William's perſon, Helie withdrew his pupil, and carried him to the court of Fulk count of Anjou, who gave him protection [r]. In proportion as the prince grew up to man's eſtate, he diſcovered virtues becoming his birth; and wandering through different courts of Europe, he excited the friendly compaſſion of many princes, and raiſed a general indignation againſt his uncle, who had ſo unjuſtly bereaved him of his inheritance. Lewis the Groſs, ſon of Philip, was at this time king of France, a brave and generous prince, who having been obliged, during the lifetime of his father, to fly into England, in order to eſcape the perſecutions of his ſtep-mother Bertrude, had been protected by Henry, and had thence conceived a perſonal friendſhip for him. But theſe ties were ſoon diſſolved after the acceſſion of Lewis, who found his intereſts to be in ſo many particulars oppoſite to thoſe of the Engliſh monarch, and who became ſenſible of the danger attending the annexation of Normandy to England. He joined, therefore, the counts of Anjou and Flanders in giving diſquiet to Henry's government;

1107.

1110.

[q] Eadmer, p. 83. Chron. Sax. p. 211, 212, 213. 219, 220. 228. H. Hunt. p. 380. Hoveden, p. 470. Ann. Waverl. p. 143.
[r] Order. Vital. p. 837.

and

CHAP. VI. 1110. and this monarch, in order to defend his foreign dominions, found himself obliged to go over to Normandy, where he resided two years. The war which ensued among those princes, was attended with no memorable event, and produced only slight skirmishes on the frontiers, agreeably to the weak condition of the sovereigns in that age, whenever their subjects were not roused by some great and urgent occasion. Henry, by contracting his eldest son William to the daughter of Fulk, detached that prince from the alliance, and obliged the others to come to an accommodation with him. This peace was not of long duration. His nephew, William, retired to the court of Baldwin, earl of Flanders, who espoused his cause; and the king of France, having soon after, for other reasons, joined the party, a new war was kindled in Normandy, which produced no event more memorable than had attended the former. 1113. At last the death of Baldwin, who was slain in an action near Eu, gave some respite to Henry, and enabled him to carry on war with more advantage against his enemies.

Lewis, finding himself unable to wrest Normandy from the king by force of arms, had recourse to the dangerous expedient of applying to the spiritual power, and of affording the ecclesiastics a pretence to interpose in the temporal concerns of princes. He carried young William to a general council, which was assembled at Rheims by pope Calixtus II. presented the Norman prince to them, complained of the manifest usurpation and injustice of Henry, craved the assistance of the church for reinstating the true heir in his dominions, and represented the enormity of detaining in captivity so brave a prince as Robert, one of the most eminent champions of the cross, and who, by that very quality, was placed under the immediate protection of the holy see. Henry knew how to defend the

CHAP. VI. 1119.

rights of his crown with vigour, and yet with dexterity. He had ſent over the Engliſh biſhops to this ſynod; but at the ſame time had warned them that if any farther claims were ſtarted by the pope or the eccleſiaſtics, he was determined to adhere to the laws and cuſtoms of England, and maintain the prerogatives tranſmitted to him by his predeceſſors. "Go," ſaid he to them, "ſalute the pope in my "name; hear his apoſtolical precepts; but take "care to bring none of his new inventions into "my kingdom." Finding, however, that it would be eaſier for him to elude than oppoſe the efforts of Calixtus, he gave his ambaſſadors orders to gain the pope and his favourites by liberal preſents and promiſes. The complaints of the Norman prince were thenceforth heard with great coldneſs by the council; and Calixtus confeſſed, after a conference which he had the ſame ſummer with Henry, and when that prince probably renewed his preſents, that, of all men whom he had ever yet been acquainted with, he was beyond compariſon the moſt eloquent and perſuaſive.

The warlike meaſures of Lewis proved as ineffectual as his intrigues. He had laid a ſcheme for ſurpriſing Noyon; but Henry having received intelligence of the deſign, marched to the relief of the place, and ſuddenly attacked the French at Brenneville, as they were advancing towards it. A ſharp conflict enſued; where prince William behaved with great bravery, and the king himſelf was in the moſt imminent danger. He was wounded in the head by Criſpin, a gallant Norman officer, who had followed the fortunes of William[s]; but being rather animated than terrified by the blow, he immediately beat his antagoniſt to the ground, and ſo encouraged his troops by the example, that they put the French to total rout, and had very nearly

[s] H. Hunt. p. 381. M. Paris, p. 47. Diceto, p. 503.

CHAP. VI. 1119.

taken their king prifoner. The dignity of the perfons engaged in this fkirmifh, rendered it the moft memorable action of the war: For, in other refpects, it was not of great importance. There were nine hundred horfemen, who fought on both fides; yet were there only two perfons flain. The reft were defended by that heavy armour worn by the cavalry in thofe times [t]. An accommodation foon after enfued between the kings of France and England; and the interefts of young William were entirely neglected in it.

1120. Death of prince William.

But this public profperity of Henry was much overbalanced by a domeftic calamity which befel him. His only fon William had now reached his eighteenth year; and the king, from the facility with which he himfelf had ufurped the crown, dreading that a like revolution might fubvert his family, had taken care to have him recognifed fucceffor by the ftates of the kingdom, and had carried him over to Normandy, that he might receive the homage of the barons of that dutchy. The king, on his return, fet fail from Barfleur, and was foon carried by a fair wind out of fight of land. The prince was detained by fome accident; and his failors, as well as their captain Thomas Fitz-Stephens, having fpent the interval in drinking, were fo fluftered, that, being in a hurry to follow the king, they heedlefsly carried the fhip on a rock, where fhe immediately foundered. William was put into the long-boat, and had got clear of the fhip; when hearing the cries of his natural fifter, the countefs of Perche, he ordered the feamen to row back in hopes of faving her: But the numbers who then crowded in, foon funk the boat; and the prince with all his retinue perifhed. Above a hundred and forty young noblemen of the principal families of England and Normandy were loft

t Order. Vital. p. 854.

on

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on this occasion. A butcher of Roüen was the only person on board who escaped [u]: He clung to the mast, and was taken up next morning by fishermen. Fitz-Stephens also took hold of the mast; but being informed by the butcher that prince William had perished, he said that he would not survive the disaster; and he threw himself headlong into the sea [w]. Henry entertained hopes for three days, that his son had put into some distant port of England: But when certain intelligence of the calamity was brought him, he fainted away; and it was remarked, that he never after was seen to smile, nor ever recovered his wonted cheerfulness [x].

THE death of William may be regarded, in one respect, as a misfortune to the English; because it was the immediate source of those civil wars, which, after the demise of the king, caused such confusion in the kingdom: But it is remarkable, that the young prince had entertained a violent aversion to the natives; and had been heard to threaten, that when he should be king, he would make them draw the plough, and would turn them into beasts of burthen. These prepossessions he inherited from his father, who, though he was wont, when it might serve his purpose, to value himself on his birth, as a native of England [y], showed, in the course of his government, an extreme prejudice against that people. All hopes of preferment, to ecclesiastical as well as civil dignities, were denied them during this whole reign; and any foreigner, however ignorant or worthless, was sure to have the preference in every competition [z]. As the English had given no disturbance to the government during the course of fifty years, this inveterate antipathy in a prince of so much temper as well as penetration, forms a presumption that the English of that age

[u] Sim. Dunelm. p. 242. Alured Beverl. p. 148.
[w] Order. Vital. p. 868. [x] Hoveden, p. 476. Order. Vital. p. 869. [y] Gul. Neub. lib. 1. cap. 3. [z] Eadmer, p. 110.

CHAP. VI. 1120. were ſtill a rude and barbarous people even compared to the Normans, and impreſſes us with no very favourable idea of the Anglo-Saxon manners.

PRINCE William left no children; and the king had not now any legitimate iſſue; except one daughter, Matilda, whom in 1110 he had betrothed, though only eight years of age[a], to the emperor Henry V. and whom he had then ſent over to be educated in Germany *. But as her abſence from the kingdom, and her marriage into a foreign family, might endanger the ſucceſſion, Henry, who was now a widower, was induced to marry in hopes of having male heirs; and he made his addreſſes to Adelais, daughter of Godfrey duke of Lovaine, and niece of pope Calixtus, a young princeſs of an amiable perſon[b]. But Adelais brought him no children; and the prince, who was moſt likely to diſpute the ſucceſſion, and even the immediate poſſeſſion of the crown, recovered hopes of ſubverting his rival, who had ſucceſſively ſeized all his patrimonial dominions. William, the ſon of duke Robert, was ſtill protected in the French court; and as Henry's connexions with the count of Anjou were broken off by the death of his ſon, Fulk joined the party of the unfortunate prince, gave him his daughter in marriage, and aided him in raiſing diſturbances in Normandy. But Henry found the means of drawing off the count of Anjou, by forming anew with him a nearer connexion than the former, and one more material to the intereſts of that count's family. The emperor, his ſon-in-law, dying without iſſue, he beſtowed his daughter on Geoffrey, the eldeſt ſon of Fulk, and endeavoured to inſure her ſucceſſion by having her recogniſed heir to all his dominions, and obliging the barons both of Normandy and England to ſwear fealty to her. He

King's ſecond Marriage. 1121.

1127.

[a] Chron. Sax. p. 215. W. Malm. p. 166. Order. Vital. p. 83.
* See note [M] at the end of the Volume.
[b] Chron. Sax. p. 223. W. Malm. p. 165.

hoped

hoped that the choice of this husband would be more agreeable to all his subjects than that of the emperor; as securing them from the danger of falling under the dominion of a great and distant potentate, who might bring them into subjection, and reduce their country to the rank of a province: But the barons were displeased, that a step so material to national interests had been taken without consulting them [c]; and Henry had too sensibly experienced the turbulence of their disposition, not to dread the effects of their resentment. It seemed probable, that his nephew's party might gain force from the increase of the malcontents: An accession of power which that prince acquired a little after, tended to render his pretensions still more dangerous. Charles earl of Flanders being assassinated during the celebration of divine service, king Lewis immediately put the young prince in possession of that county, to which he had pretensions in the right of his grandmother Matilda, wife to the Conqueror. But William survived a very little time this piece of good fortune, which seemed to open the way to still farther prosperity. He was killed in a skirmish with the landgrave of Alsace, his competitor for Flanders; and his death put an end, for the present, to the jealousy and inquietude of Henry.

CHAP. VI. 1128.

THE chief merit of this monarch's government consists in the profound tranquillity which he established and maintained throughout all his dominions during the greater part of his reign. The mutinous barons were retained in subjection; and his neighbours, in every attempt which they made upon him, found him so well prepared, that they were discouraged from continuing or renewing their enterprises. In order to repress the incursions of the Welsh, he brought over some Flemings, in the year 1111, and settled them in Pembrokeshire, where

[c] W. Malm. p 175. The annals of Waverly, p. 150. say, that the king asked and obtained the consent of all the barons.

CHAP. VI. 1128. they long maintained a different language, and cuſtoms, and manners, from their neighbours. Though his government ſeems to have been arbitrary in England, it was judicious and prudent; and was as little oppreſſive as the neceſſity of his affairs would permit. He wanted not attention to the redreſs of grievances; and hiſtorians mention in particular the levying of purveyance, which he endeavoured to moderate and reſtrain. The tenants in the king's demeſne lands were at that time obliged to ſupply *gratis* the court with proviſions, and to furniſh carriages on the ſame hard terms, when the king made a progreſs, as he did frequently, into any of the counties. Theſe exactions were ſo grievous, and levied in ſo licentious a manner, that the farmers, when they heard of the approach of the court, often deſerted their houſes as if an enemy had invaded the country [d]; and ſheltered their perſons and families in the woods, from the inſults of the king's retinue. Henry prohibited thoſe enormities, and puniſhed the perſons guilty of them by cutting off their hands, legs, or other members [e]. But the prerogative was perpetual; the remedy applied by Henry was temporary; and the violence itſelf of this remedy, ſo far from giving ſecurity to the people, was only a proof of the ferocity of the government, and threatened a quick return of like abuſes.

One great and difficult object of the king's prudence was, the guarding againſt the encroachments of the court of Rome, and protecting the liberties of the church of England. The pope, in the year 1101, had ſent Guy, archbiſhop of Vienne, as legate into Britain; and though he was the firſt that for many years had appeared there in that character, and his commiſſion gave general ſurpriſe [f]. the king, who was then in the commencement of his reign,

[d] Eadmer, p. 94. Chron. Sax. p. 212. [e] Eadmer, p. 94.
[f] Ibid. p. 58.

and

and was involved in many difficulties, was obliged to submit to this encroachment on his authority. But in the year 1116, Anſelm abbot of St. Sabas, who was coming over with a like legantine commiſſion, was prohibited from entering the kingdom [g]; and pope Calixtus, who in his turn was then labouring under many difficulties, by reaſon of the pretenſions of Gregory, an antipope, was obliged to promiſe, that he never would for the future, except when ſolicited by the king himſelf, ſend any legate into England [h]. Notwithſtanding this engagement, the pope, as ſoon as he had ſuppreſſed his antagoniſt, granted the cardinal de Crema a legantine commiſſion over that kingdom; and the king, who, by reaſon of his nephew's intrigues and invaſions, found himſelf at that time in a dangerous ſituation, was obliged to ſubmit to the exerciſe of this commiſſion [i]. A ſynod was called by the legate at London; where, among other canons, a vote paſſed, enacting ſevere penalties on the marriages of the clergy [k]. The cardinal, in a public harangue, declared it to be an unpardonable enormity, that a prieſt ſhould dare to conſecrate and touch the body of Chriſt immediately after he had riſen from the ſide of a ſtrumpet: For that was the decent appellation which he gave to the wives of the clergy. But it happened, that the very next night the officers of juſtice, breaking into a diſorderly houſe, found the cardinal in bed with a courtezan [l]; an incident which threw ſuch ridicule upon him, that he immediately ſtole out of the kingdom: The ſynod broke up; and the canons againſt the marriage of clergymen were worſe executed than ever [m].

CHAP. VI. 1128.

[g] Hoveden, p. 474. [h] Eadmer, p. 125. 137, 138.
[i] Chron. Sax. p. 229. [k] Spelm. Conc. vol. ii. p. 34.
[l] Hoveden, p. 478. M. Paris, p. 48. Matth. Weſt. ad ann. 1125. H. Huntingdon, p. 382. It is remarkable, that this laſt writer, who was a clergyman as well as the others, makes an apology for uſing ſuch freedom with the fathers of the church; but ſays, that the fact was notorious, and ought not to be concealed.
[m] Chron. Sax. p. 234.

CHAP. VI. 1128. HENRY, in order to prevent this alternate revolution of conceſſions and encroachments, ſent William, then archbiſhop of Canterbury, to remonſtrate with the court of Rome againſt thoſe abuſes, and to aſſert the liberties of the Engliſh church. It was a uſual maxim with every pope, when he found that he could not prevail in any pretenſion, to grant princes or ſtates a power which they had always exerciſed, to reſume at a proper juncture the claim which ſeemed to be reſigned, and to pretend that the civil magiſtrate had poſſeſſed the authority only from a ſpecial indulgence of the Roman pontiff. After this manner, the pope, finding that the French nation would not admit his claim of granting inveſtitures, had paſſed a bull, giving the king that authority; and he now practiſed a like invention to elude the complaints of the king of England. He made the archbiſhop of Canterbury his legate, renewed his commiſſion from time to time, and ſtill pretended that the rights which that prelate had ever exerciſed as metropolitan, were entirely derived from the indulgence of the apoſtolic ſee. The Engliſh princes, and Henry in particular, who were glad to avoid any immediate conteſt of ſo dangerous a nature, commonly acquieſced by their ſilence in theſe pretenſions of the court of Rome *.

1131. As every thing in England remained in tranquillity, Henry took the opportunity of paying a viſit to Normandy, to which he was invited as well by his affection for that country, as by his tenderneſs for his daughter the empreſs Matilda, who was always his favourite. Some time after, that princeſs was
1132. delivered of a ſon, who received the name of Henry; and the king, farther to enſure her ſucceſſion, made all the nobility of England and Normandy renew the oath of fealty, which they had already ſworn to her [n]. The joy of this event, and the ſa-

* See note [N] at the end of the volume. [n] W. Malm. p. 172.

tisfaction which he reaped from his daughter's company, who bore successively two other sons, made his residence in Normandy very agreeable to him [o]; and he seemed determined to pass the remainder of his days in that country; when an incursion of the Welsh obliged him to think of returning into England. He was preparing for the journey, but was seized with a sudden illness at St. Dennis le Forment, from eating too plentifully of lampreys, a food which always agreed better with his palate than his constitution [p]. He died in the sixty-seventh year of his age, and the thirty-fifth of his reign; leaving by will his daughter Matilda heir of all his dominions, without making any mention of her husband Geoffrey, who had given him several causes of displeasure [q].

CHAP. VI. 1135.

1st of Dec.

Death

THIS prince was one of the most accomplished that has filled the English throne, and possessed all the great qualities both of body and mind, natural and acquired, which could fit him for the high station to which he attained. His person was manly, his countenance engaging, his eyes clear, serene, and penetrating. The affability of his address encouraged those who might be overawed by the sense of his dignity or of his wisdom; and though he often indulged his facetious humour, he knew how to temper it with discretion, and ever kept at a distance from all indecent familiarities with his courtiers. His superior eloquence and judgment would have given him an ascendant, even had he been born in a private station; and his personal bravery would have procured him respect, though it had been less supported by art and policy. By his great progress in literature, he acquired the name of *Beau-clerk*, or the scholar: But his application to those sedentary pursuits abated nothing of the activity and vigilance of his government; and though

and character of Henry.

[o] H. Hunt. p. 385. [p] H. Hunt. p. 385. M. Paris, p. 50.
[q] W. Malm. p. 178.

the

CHAP. VI. 1135. the learning of that age was better fitted to corrupt than improve the underſtanding, his natural good ſenſe preſerved itſelf untainted, both from the pedantry and ſuperſtition which were then ſo prevalent among men of letters. His temper was ſuſceptible of the ſentiments as well of friendſhip as of reſentment [r]; and his ambition, though high, might be deemed moderate and reaſonable, had not his conduct towards his brother and nephew ſhowed that he was too much diſpoſed to ſacrifice to it all the maxims of juſtice and equity. But the total incapacity of Robert for government afforded his younger brother a reaſon or pretence for ſeizing the ſceptre both of England and Normandy; and when violence and uſurpation are once begun, neceſſity obliges a prince to continue in the ſame criminal courſe, and engages him in meaſures which his better judgment and ſounder principles would otherwiſe have induced him to reject with warmth and indignation.

King Henry was much addicted to women; and hiſtorians mention no leſs than ſeven illegitimate ſons and ſix daughters born to him [s]. Hunting was alſo one of his favourite amuſements; and he exerciſed great rigour againſt thoſe who encroached on the royal foreſts, which were augmented during his reign [t], though their number and extent were already too great. To kill a ſtag was as criminal as to murder a man: He made all the dogs be mutilated which were kept on the borders of his foreſts: And he ſometimes deprived his ſubjects of the liberty of hunting on their own lands, or even cutting their own woods. In other reſpects he executed juſtice, and that with rigour; the beſt maxim which a prince in that age could follow. Stealing was firſt made capital in this reign [u]: Falſe coining,

[r] Order. Vital. p. 805. [s] Gul. Gemet. lib. 8. cap. 29. [t] W. Malm. p. 179. [u] Sim. Dunelm. p. 231. Brompton, p. 1000. Flor. Wigorn. p. 653. Hoveden, p. 471.

which

CHAP. VI. 1135.

which was then a very common crime, and by which the money had been extremely debaſed, was ſeverely puniſhed by Henry [w]. Near fifty criminals of this kind were at one time hanged or mutilated; and though theſe puniſhments ſeem to have been exerciſed in a manner ſomewhat arbitrary, they were grateful to the people, more attentive to preſent advantages than jealous of general laws. There is a code which paſſes under the name of Henry I. but the beſt antiquaries have agreed to think it ſpurious. It is however a very ancient compilation, and may be uſeful to inſtruct us in the manners and cuſtoms of the times. We learn from it, that a great diſtinction was then made between the Engliſh and Normans, much to the advantage of the latter [x]. The deadly feuds, and the liberty of private revenge, which had been avowed by the Saxon laws, were ſtill continued, and were not yet wholly illegal [y].

Among the laws granted on the king's acceſſion, it is remarkable that the re-union of the civil and eccleſiaſtical courts, as in the Saxon times, was enacted [z]. But this law, like the articles of his charter, remained without effect, probably from the oppoſition of archbiſhop Anſelm.

Henry, on his acceſſion, granted a charter to London, which ſeems to have been the firſt ſtep towards rendering that city a corporation. By this charter the city was empowered to keep the farm of Middleſex at three hundred pounds a year, to elect its own ſheriff and juſticiary, and to hold pleas of the crown; and it was exempted from ſcot, Danegelt, trials by combat, and lodging the king's retinue. Theſe, with a confirmation of the privileges of their court of huſtings, wardmotes, and

[w] Sim. Dunelm. p. 231. Brompton, p. 1000. Hoveden, p. 471. Annal. Waverl. p. 149. [x] LL. Hen. 1. § 18. 75.
[y] LL. Hen. § 82. [z] Spelm. p. 305. Blackſtone, vol. iii. p. 63. Coke, 2 Inſt. 70.

CHAP. VI. 1135.

common halls, and their liberty of hunting in Middlesex and Surrey, are the chief articles of this charter [a].

It is said [b] that this prince, from indulgence to his tenants, changed the rents of his demesnes, which were formerly paid in kind, into money, which was more easily remitted to the exchequer. But the great scarcity of coin would render that commutation difficult to be executed, while at the same time provisions could not be sent to a distant quarter of the kingdom. This affords a probable reason why the ancient kings of England so frequently changed their place of abode: They carried their court from one place to another, that they might consume upon the spot the revenue of their several demesnes.

[a] Lambardi Archaionomia ex edit. Twisden. Wilkins, p. 235.
[b] Dial. de Scaccario, lib. 1. cap. 7.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL. THE TANJORE

CHAP. VII.

STEPHEN.

Accession of Stephen——War with Scotland——Insurrection in favour of Matilda——Stephen taken prisoner——Matilda crowned——Stephen released——Restored to the crown——Continuation of the civil wars——Compromise between the king and prince Henry——Death of the king.

CHAP. VII. 1135.

IN the progress and settlement of the feudal law, the male succession to fiefs had taken place some time before the female was admitted; and estates being considered as military benefices, not as property, were transmitted to such only as could serve in the armies, and perform in person the conditions upon which they were originally granted. But when the continuance of rights, during some generations, in the same family, had, in a great measure, obliterated the primitive idea, the females were gradually admitted to the possession of feudal property; and the same revolution of principles which procured them the inheritance of private estates, naturally introduced their succession to government and authority. The failure, therefore, of male heirs to the kingdom of England and dutchy of Normandy, seemed to leave the succession open, without a rival, to the empress Matilda; and as Henry had made all his vassals in both states swear fealty to her, he presumed that they would not easily be induced to depart at once from her hereditary right, and from their own reiterated oaths and engagements. But the irregular manner in which he himself had acquired the crown, might have instructed him, that neither his Norman nor English

CHAP. VII. 1135. English subjects were as yet capable of adhering to a strict rule of government; and as every precedent of this kind seems to give authority to new usurpations, he had reason to dread, even from his own family, some invasion of his daughters title, which he had taken such pains to establish.

Adela, daughter of William the Conqueror, had been married to Stephen count of Blois, and had brought him several sons, among whom Stephen and Henry, the two youngest, had been invited over to England by the late king, and had received great honours, riches, and preferment, from the zealous friendship which that prince bore to every one that had been so fortunate as to acquire his favour and good opinion. Henry, who had betaken himself to the ecclesiastical profession, was created abbot of Glastenbury and bishop of Winchester; and though these dignities were considerable, Stephen had, from his uncle's liberality, attained establishments still more solid and durable [a]. The king had married him to Matilda, who was daughter and heir of Eustace count of Boulogne, and who brought him, besides that feudal sovereignty in France, an immense property in England, which in the distribution of lands had been conferred by the Conqueror on the family of Boulogne. Stephen also by this marriage acquired a new connexion with the royal family of England; as Mary his wife's mother, was sister to David the reigning king of Scotland, and to Matilda, the first wife of Henry, and mother of the empress. The king, still imagining that he strengthened the interests of his family by the aggrandizement of Stephen, took pleasure in enriching him by the grant of new possessions; and he conferred on him the great estate forfeited by Robert Mallet in England, and that forfeited by the earl of Mortaigne in Nor-

[a] Gul. Neubr. p. 360. Brompton, p. 1023.

mandy.

mandy. Stephen, in return, professed great attachment to his uncle; and appeared so zealous for the succession of Matilda, that, when the barons swore fealty to that princess, he contended with Robert earl of Gloucester, the king's natural son, who should first be admitted to give her this testimony of devoted zeal and fidelity [b]. Meanwhile he continued to cultivate, by every art of popularity, the friendship of the English nation; and many virtues with which he seemed to be endowed, favoured the success of his intentions. By his bravery, activity, and vigour, he acquired the esteem of the barons: By his generosity, and by an affable and familiar address, unusual in that age among men of his high quality, he obtained the affections of the people, particularly of the Londoners [c]. And though he dared not to take any steps towards his farther grandeur, lest he should expose himself to the jealousy of so penetrating a prince as Henry; he still hoped that, by accumulating riches and power, and by acquiring popularity, he might in time be able to open his way to the throne.

CHAP. VII. 1135.

No sooner had Henry breathed his last than Stephen, insensible to all the ties of gratitude and fidelity, and blind to danger, gave full reins to his criminal ambition, and trusted that, even without any previous intrigue, the celerity of his enterprise, and the boldness of his attempt, might overcome the weak attachment which the English and Normans in that age bore to the laws and to the rights of their sovereign. He hastened over to England; and though the citizens of Dover, and those of Canterbury, apprised of his purpose, shut their gates against him, he stopped not till he arrived at London, where some of the lower rank, instigated by his emissaries, as well as moved by his general popularity, immediately saluted him king. His next point was to ac-

[b] W. Malm. p. 192. [c] Ibid. p. 179. Gest. Steph. p. 928.

quire

CHAP. VII. 1135. quire the good-will of the clergy; and by performing the ceremony of his coronation, to put himself in possession of the throne, from which he was confident it would not be easy afterwards to expel him. His brother, the bishop of Winchester, was useful to him in these capital articles: Having gained Roger bishop of Salisbury, who, though he owed a great fortune and advancement to the favour of the late king, preserved no sense of gratitude to that prince's family; he applied, in conjunction with that prelate, to William archbishop of Canterbury, and required him, in virtue of his office, to give the royal unction to Stephen. The primate, who, as all the others, had sworn fealty to Matilda, refused to perform this ceremony; but his opposition was overcome by an expedient equally dishonourable with the other steps by which this revolution was effected. Hugh Bigod, steward of the household, made oath before the primate, that the late king on his death-bed had shown a dissatisfaction with his daughter Matilda, and had expressed his intention of leaving the count of Boulogne heir to all his dominions [d]. William, either believing, or feigning to believe, Bigod's testimony, anointed Stephen, and

22d Dec. put the crown upon his head; and from this religious ceremony that prince, without any shadow either of hereditary title or consent of the nobility or people, was allowed to proceed to the exercise of sovereign authority. Very few barons attended his coronation [e]; but none opposed his usurpation, however unjust or flagrant. The sentiment of religion, which, if corrupted into superstition, has often little efficacy in fortifying the duties of civil society, was not affected by the multiplied oaths taken in favour of Matilda, and only rendered the people obedient to a prince who was countenanced

[d] Matth. Paris, p. 51. Diceto, p. 505. Chron. Dunst. p. 25.
[e] Brompton, p. 1023.

by

1135.

by the clergy, and who had received from the primate the rite of royal unction and consecration [f].

STEPHEN, that he might farther secure his tottering throne, passed a charter, in which he made liberal promises to all orders of men; to the clergy, that he would speedily fill all vacant benefices, and would never levy the rents of any of them during the vacancy; to the nobility, that he would reduce the royal forests to their ancient boundaries, and correct all encroachments; and to the people, that he would remit the tax of Danegelt, and restore the laws of king Edward [g]. The late king had a great treasure at Winchester, amounting to a hundred thousand pounds: And Stephen, by seizing this money, immediately turned against Henry's family the precaution which that prince had employed for their grandeur and security: An event which naturally attends the policy of amassing treasures. By means of this money the usurper insured the compliance, though not the attachment, of the principal clergy and nobility; but not trusting to this frail security, he invited over from the continent, particularly from Britanny and Flanders, great numbers of those bravoes or disorderly soldiers, with whom every country in Europe, by reason of the general ill police and turbulent government, extremely abounded [h]. These mercenary troops guarded his throne by the terrors of the sword; and Stephen, that he might also overawe all malcontents by new and additional terrors of religion, procured a bull from Rome, which ratified his title, and which the pope, seeing this prince in possession of the throne, and pleased with an appeal to his authority in secular controversies, very readily granted him [i].

[f] Such stress was formerly laid on the rite of coronation, that the monkish writers never give any prince the title of king till he is crowned; though he had for some time been in possession of the crown, and exercised all the powers of sovereignty.

[g] W. Malm. p. 179. Hoveden, p. 482. [h] W. Malm. p. 179.

[i] Hagulstad. p. 259. 313.

CHAP. VII. 1136.

Matilda, and her husband Geoffrey, were as unfortunate in Normandy as they had been in England. The Norman nobility, moved by an hereditary animosity against the Angevins, first applied to Theobald count of Blois, Stephen's elder brother, for protection and assistance; but hearing afterwards that Stephen had got possession of the English crown, and having many of them the same reasons as formerly for desiring a continuance of their union with that kingdom, they transferred their allegiance to Stephen, and put him in possession of their government. Lewis the younger, the reigning king of France, accepted the homage of Eustace, Stephen's eldest son, for the dutchy; and the more to corroborate his connexions with that family, he betrothed his sister Constantia to the young prince. The count of Blois resigned all his pretensions, and received in lieu of them an annual pension of two thousand marks; and Geoffrey himself was obliged to conclude a truce for two years with Stephen, on condition of the king's paying him, during that time, a pension of five thousand [k]. Stephen, who had taken a journey to Normandy, finished all these transactions in person, and soon after returned to England.

Robert earl of Glocester, natural son of the late king, was a man of honour and abilities; and as he was much attached to the interests of his sister Matilda, and zealous for the lineal succession, it was chiefly from his intrigues and resistance that the king had reason to dread a new revolution of government. This nobleman, who was in Normandy when he received intelligence of Stephen's accession, found himself much embarrassed concerning the measures which he should pursue in that difficult emergency. To swear allegiance to the usurper appeared to him dishonourable, and a

[k] M. Paris, p. 52.

breach

CHAP. VII. 1136.

breach of his oath to Matilda: To refuse giving this pledge of his fidelity, was to banish himself from England, and be totally incapacitated from serving the royal family, or contributing to their restoration[l]. He offered Stephen to do him homage, and to take the oath of fealty; but with an express condition that the king should maintain all his stipulations, and should never invade any of Robert's rights or dignities: And Stephen, though sensible that this reserve, so unusual in itself, and so unbefitting the duty of a subject, was meant only to afford Robert a pretence for a revolt on the first favourable opportunity, was obliged, by the numerous friends and retainers of that nobleman, to receive him on those terms[m]. The clergy, who could scarcely at this time be deemed subjects to the crown, imitated that dangerous example: They annexed to their oaths of allegiance this condition, that they were only bound so long as the king defended the ecclesiastical liberties, and supported the discipline of the church[n]. The barons, in return for their submission, exacted terms still more destructive of public peace, as well as of royal authority: Many of them required the right of fortifying their castles, and of putting themselves in a posture of defence; and the king found himself totally unable to refuse his consent to this exorbitant demand[o]. All England was immediately filled with those fortresses, which the noblemen garrisoned either with their vassals, or with licentious soldiers, who flocked to them from all quarters. Unbounded rapine was exercised upon the people for the maintenance of these troops; and private animosities, which had with difficulty been restrained by law, now breaking out without control, rendered England a scene of uninterrupted violence and devastation. Wars between the nobles were carried on

[l] Malmes. p. 179. [m] Ibid. M. Paris, p. 51.
[n] W. Malm. p. 179. [o] Ibid. p. 180.

CHAP. VII. 1136. with the utmoſt fury in every quarter; the barons even aſſumed the right of coining money, and of exerciſing, without appeal, every act of juriſdiction [p]; and the inferior gentry, as well as the people, finding no defence from the laws during this total diſſolution of ſovereign authority, were obliged, for their immediate ſafety, to pay court to ſome neighbouring chieftain, and to purchaſe his protection, both by ſubmitting to his exactions, and by aſſiſting him in his rapine upon others. The erection of one caſtle proved the immediate cauſe of building many others; and even thoſe who obtained not the king's permiſſion, thought that they were entitled, by the great principle of ſelf-preſervation, to put themſelves on an equal footing with their neighbours, who commonly were alſo their enemies and rivals. The ariſtocratical power, which is uſually ſo oppreſſive in the feudal governments, had now riſen to its utmoſt height during the reign of a prince who, though endowed with vigour and abilities, had uſurped the throne without the pretence of a title, and who was neceſſitated to tolerate in others the ſame violence to which he himſelf had been beholden for his ſovereignty.

But Stephen was not of a diſpoſition to ſubmit long to theſe uſurpations, without making ſome effort for the recovery of royal authority. Finding that the legal prerogatives of the crown were reſiſted and abridged, he was alſo tempted to make his power the ſole meaſure of his conduct; and to violate all thoſe conceſſions which he himſelf had made on his acceſſion [q], as well as the ancient privileges of his ſubjects. The mercenary ſoldiers, who chiefly ſupported his authority, having exhauſted the royal treaſure, ſubſiſted by depredations; and every place was filled with the beſt grounded complaints againſt the government. The

[p] Trivet, p. 19. Gul. Neub. p. 372. Chron. Heming. p. 487. Brompton, p. 1035. [q] W. Malm. p. 180. M. Paris, p. 51.

CHAP. VII.

1137.

earl of Glocester, having now settled with his friends the plan of an insurrection, retired beyond sea, sent the king a defiance, solemnly renounced his allegiance, and upbraided him with the breach of those conditions which had been annexed to the oath of fealty sworn by that nobleman[r]. David, king of Scotland, appeared at the head of an army in defence of his niece's title, and, penetrating into Yorkshire, committed the most barbarous devastations on that country. The fury of his massacres and ravages enraged the northern nobility, who might otherwise have been inclined to join him; and William earl of Albemarle, Robert de Ferrers, William Piercy, Robert de Brus, Roger Moubray, Ilbert Lacey, Walter l'Espec, powerful barons in those parts, assembled an army, with which they encamped at North-Allerton, and awaited the arrival of the enemy. A great battle was here fought, called the battle of the *Standard*, from a high crucifix, erected by the English on a waggon, and carried along with the army as a military ensign. The king of Scots was defeated, and he himself, as well as his son Henry, narrowly escaped falling into the hands of the English. This success overawed the malcontents in England, and might have given some stability to Stephen's throne, had he not been so elated with prosperity as to engage in a controversy with the clergy, who were at that time an overmatch for any monarch.

1138. War with Scotland.

22d Aug.

THOUGH the great power of the church in ancient times weakened the authority of the crown, and interrupted the course of the laws, it may be doubted whether, in ages of such violence and outrage, it was not rather advantageous that some limits were set to the power of the sword, both in the hands of the prince and nobles, and that men were taught to pay regard to some principles and

[r] W. Malm. p. 180.

 privi-

CHAP. VII. 1139. privileges. The chief misfortune was, that the prelates on ſome occaſions acted entirely as barons, employed military power againſt their ſovereign or their neighbours, and thereby often encreaſed thoſe diſorders which it was their duty to repreſs. The biſhop of Saliſbury, in imitation of the nobility, had built two ſtrong caſtles, one at Sherborne, another at the Devizes, and had laid the foundations of a third at Malmeſbury: His nephew Alexander, biſhop of Lincoln, had erected a fortreſs at Newark: And Stephen, who was now ſenſible from experience of the miſchiefs attending theſe multiplied citadels, reſolved to begin with deſtroying thoſe of the clergy, who by their function ſeemed leſs entitled than the barons to ſuch military ſecurities[s]. Making pretence of a fray which had ariſen in court between the retinue of the biſhop of Saliſbury and that of the earl of Britanny, he ſeized both that prelate and the biſhop of Lincoln, threw them into priſon, and obliged them by menaces to deliver up thoſe places of ſtrength which they had lately erected[t].

HENRY biſhop of Wincheſter, the king's brother, being armed with a legantine commiſſion, now conceived himſelf to be an eccleſiaſtical ſovereign no leſs powerful than the civil; and forgetting the ties of blood which connected him with the king, he reſolved to vindicate the clerical privileges, which he pretended were here openly violated. 30th Aug. He aſſembled a ſynod at Weſtminſter, and there complained of the impiety of Stephen's meaſures, who had employed violence againſt the dignitaries of the church, and had not awaited the ſentence of a ſpiritual court, by which alone, he affirmed, they could lawfully be tried and condemned, if their conduct had anywiſe merited cenſure or puniſhment[u]. The ſynod ventured to ſend a ſummons

[s] Gul. Neubr. p. 362. [t] Chron. Sax. p. 238. W. Malmeſ. p. 181. [u] W. Malm. p. 182.

CHAP. VII.

1139.

to the king, charging him to appear before them, and to juſtify his meaſures [w]; and Stephen, inſtead of reſenting this indignity, ſent Aubrey de Vere to plead his cauſe before that aſſembly. De Vere accuſed the two prelates of treaſon and ſedition; but the ſynod refuſed to try the cauſe, or examine their conduct, till thoſe caſtles, of which they had been diſpoſſeſſed, were previouſly reſtored to them [x]. The biſhop of Saliſbury declared that he would appeal to the pope; and had not Stephen and his partiſans employed menaces, and even ſhown a diſpoſition of executing violence by the hands of the ſoldiery, affairs had inſtantly come to extremity between the crown and the mitre [y].

22d Sept. Inſurrection in favour of Matilda.

WHILE this quarrel, joined to ſo many other grievances, encreaſed the diſcontents among the people, the empreſs, invited by the opportunity, and ſecretly encouraged by the legate himſelf, landed in England, with Robert earl of Gloceſter, and a retinue of a hundred and forty knights. She fixed her reſidence at Arundel caſtle, whoſe gates were opened to her by Adelais the queen-dowager, now married to William de Albini earl of Suſſex; and ſhe excited by meſſengers her partiſans to take arms in every county of England. Adelais, who had expected that her daughter-in-law would have invaded the kingdom with a much greater force, became apprehenſive of danger; and Matilda, to eaſe her of her fears, removed firſt to Briſtol, which belonged to her brother Robert, thence to Gloceſter, where ſhe remained under the protection of Milo, a gallant nobleman in thoſe parts, who had embraced her cauſe. Soon after Geoffrey Talbot, William Mohun, Ralph Lovel, William Fitz-John, William Fitz-Alan, Paganell, and many other barons, declared for her; and her party, which

[w] W. Malm. p. 182. M. Paris, p. 53. [x] W. Malm. p. 183. [y] Ibid.

CHAP. VII. was generally favoured in the kingdom, ſeemed every day to gain ground upon that of her antagoniſt.

1139. Were we to relate all the military events tranſmitted to us by contemporary and authentic hiſtorians, it would be eaſy to ſwell our accounts of this reign into a large volume: But thoſe incidents, ſo little memorable in themſelves, and ſo confuſed both in time and place, could afford neither inſtruction nor entertainment to the reader. It ſuffices to ſay, that the war was ſpread into every quarter; and that thoſe turbulent barons, who had already ſhaken off, in a great meaſure, the reſtraint of government, having now obtained the pretence of a public cauſe, carried on their devaſtations with redoubled fury, exerciſed implacable vengeance on each other, and ſet no bounds to their oppreſſions over the people. The caſtles of the nobility were become receptacles of licenſed robbers; who, ſallying forth day and night, committed ſpoil on the open country, on the villages, and even on the cities; put the captives to torture, in order to make them reveal their treaſures; ſold their perſons to ſlavery; and ſet fire to their houſes, after they had pillaged them of every thing valuable. The fierceneſs of their diſpoſition, leading them to commit wanton deſtruction, fruſtrated their rapacity of its purpoſe; and the poverty and perſons even of the eccleſiaſtics, generally ſo much revered, were at laſt, from neceſſity, expoſed to the ſame outrage which had laid waſte the reſt of the kingdom. The land was left untilled; the inſtruments of huſbandry were deſtroyed or abandoned; and a grievous famine, the natural reſult of thoſe diſorders, affected equally both parties, and reduced the ſpoilers, as well as the defenceleſs people, to the moſt extreme want and indigence[z].

[z] Chron. Sax. p. 238. W. Malmeſ. p. 185. Geſt. Steph. p. 961.

After

CHAP. VII.

1140.

After feveral fruitlefs negotiations and treaties of peace, which never interrupted thefe deftructive hoftilities, there happened at laft an event, which feemed to promife fome end of the public calamities. Ralph, earl of Chefter, and his half-brother William de Roumara, partifans of Matilda, had furprifed the caftle of Lincoln; but the citizens, who were better affected to Stephen, having invited him to their aid, that prince laid clofe fiege to the caftle, in hopes of foon rendering himfelf mafter of the place, either by affault or by famine. The earl of Glocefter haftened with an army to the relief of his friends; and Stephen, informed of his approach, took the field with a refolution of giving him battle. After a violent fhock, the two wings of the royalifts were put to flight; and Stephen himfelf, furrounded by the enemy, was at laft, after exerting great efforts of valour, borne down by numbers, and taken prifoner. He was conducted to Glocefter; and though at firft treated with humanity, was foon after, on fome fufpicion, thrown into prifon, and loaded with irons.

1141. 2d Feb.

Stephen taken prifoner.

Stephen's party was entirely broken by the captivity of their leader, and the barons came in daily from all quarters, and did homage to Matilda. The princefs, however, amidft all her profperity, knew that fhe was not fecure of fuccefs, unlefs fhe could gain the confidence of the clergy; and as the conduct of the legate had been of late very ambiguous, and fhowed his intentions to have rather aimed at humbling his brother, than totally ruining him, fhe employed every endeavour to fix him in her interefts. She held a conference with him in an open plain near Winchefter; where fhe promifed upon oath, that if he would acknowledge her for fovereign, would recognife her title as the fole defcendant of the late king, and would again fubmit to the allegiance which he, as well as the reft of the kingdom, had fworn to her, he fhould in return

2d March.

CHAP. VII. 1141.

return be entire maſter of the adminiſtration, and in particular ſhould, at his pleaſure, diſpoſe of all vacant biſhoprics and abbies. Earl Robert, her brother, Brian Fitz-Count, Milo of Gloceſter, and other great men, became guarantees for her obſerving theſe engagements [a]; and the prelate was at laſt induced to promiſe her allegiance, but that ſtill burdened with the expreſs condition, that ſhe ſhould on her part fulfil her promiſes. He then conducted her to Wincheſter, led her in proceſſion to the cathedral, and with great ſolemnity, in the preſence of many biſhops and abbots, denounced curſes againſt all thoſe who curſed her, poured out bleſſings on thoſe who bleſſed her, granted abſolution to ſuch as were obedient to her, and excommunicated ſuch as were rebellious [b]. Theobald archbiſhop of Canterbury ſoon after came alſo to court, and ſwore allegiance to the empreſs [c].

Matilda crowned.

Matilda, that ſhe might farther enſure the attachment of the clergy, was willing to receive the crown from their hands; and inſtead of aſſembling the ſtates of the kingdom, the meaſure which the conſtitution, had it been either fixed or regarded, ſeemed neceſſarily to require, ſhe was content, that the legate ſhould ſummon an eccleſiaſtical ſynod, and that her title to the throne ſhould there be acknowledged. The legate, addreſſing himſelf to the aſſembly, told them, that in the abſence of the empreſs, Stephen his brother had been permitted to reign, and, previouſly to his aſcending the throne, had ſeduced them by many fair promiſes of honouring and exalting the church, of maintaining the laws, and of reforming all abuſes: That it grieved him to obſerve how much that prince had in every particular been wanting to his engagements; public peace was interrupted, crimes were daily committed with impunity, biſhops were thrown into priſon and

[a] W. Malm. p. 187. [b] Chron. Sax. p. 242. Contin. Flor. Wig. p. 676. [c] W. Malmeſ. p. 187.

forced

1141.

forced to ſurrender their poſſeſſions, abbies were put to ſale, churches were pillaged, and the moſt enormous diſorders prevailed in the adminiſtration: That he himſelf, in order to procure a redreſs of theſe grievances, had formerly ſummoned the king before a council of biſhops; but inſtead of inducing him to amend his conduct, had rather offended him by that expedient: That, how much ſoever miſguided, that prince was ſtill his brother, and the object of his affections; but his intereſts, however, muſt be regarded as ſubordinate to thoſe of their heavenly Father, who had now rejected him, and thrown him into the hands of his enemies: That it principally belonged to the clergy to elect and ordain kings; he had ſummoned them together for that purpoſe, and having invoked the divine aſſiſtance, he now pronounced Matilda the only deſcendant of Henry, their late ſovereign, queen of England. The whole aſſembly, by their acclamations or ſilence, gave, or ſeemed to give, their aſſent to this declaration [d].

The only laymen ſummoned to this council, which decided the fate of the crown, were the Londoners; and even theſe were required not to give their opinion, but to ſubmit to the decrees of the ſynod. The deputies of London, however, were not ſo paſſive: They inſiſted that their king ſhould be delivered from priſon; but were told by the legate, that it became not the Londoners, who were regarded as noblemen in England, to take part with thoſe barons, who had baſely forſaken their lord in battle, and who had treated holy church with contumely [e]. It is with reaſon that the citizens of London aſſumed ſo much authority, if it be true, what is related by Fitz-Stephen, a con-

[d] W. Malmeſ. p. 188. This author, a judicious man, was preſent, and ſays, that he was very attentive to what paſſed. This ſpeech, therefore, may be regarded as entirely genuine.
[e] W. Malmeſ. p. 188.

temporary

CHAP. VII. 1141.

temporary author, that that city could at this time bring into the field no less than 80,000 combatants[f].

LONDON, notwithstanding its great power, and its attachment to Stephen, was at length obliged to submit to Matilda; and her authority, by the prudent conduct of earl Robert, seemed to be established over the whole kingdom: But affairs remained not long in this situation. That princess, besides the disadvantages of her sex, which weakened her influence over a turbulent and martial people, was of a passionate, imperious spirit, and knew not how to temper with affability the harshness of a refusal. Stephen's queen, seconded by many of the nobility, petitioned for the liberty of her husband; and offered that, on this condition, he should renounce the crown, and retire into a convent. The legate desired that prince Eustace, his nephew, might inherit Boulogne and the other patrimonial estates of his father[g]: The Londoners applied for the establishment of king Edward's laws, instead of those of king Henry, which, they said, were grievous and oppressive[h]. All these petitions were rejected in the most haughty and peremptory manner.

THE legate, who had probably never been sincere in his compliance with Matilda's government, availed himself of the ill-humour excited by this imperious conduct, and secretly instigated the Londoners to a revolt. A conspiracy was entered into

[f] P. 4. Were this account to be depended on, London must at that time have contained near 400,000 inhabitants, which is above double the number it contained at the death of queen Elizabeth. But these loose calculations, or rather guesses, deserve very little credit. Peter of Blois, a contemporary writer, and a man of sense, says there were then only forty thousand inhabitants in London, which is much more likely. See Epist. 151. What Fitz-Stephen says of the prodigious riches, splendour, and commerce of London, proves only the great poverty of the other towns of the kingdom, and indeed of all the northern parts of Europe.

[g] Brompton, p. 1031. Gervase, p. 1355.

[h] Contin. Flor. Wig. p. 677.

to seize the person of the empress; and she saved herself from the danger by a precipitate retreat. She fled to Oxford: Soon after she went to Winchester; whither the legate, desirous to save appearances, and watching the opportunity to ruin her cause, had retired. But having assembled all his retainers, he openly joined his force to that of the Londoners, and to Stephen's mercenary troops, who had not yet evacuated the kingdom; and he besieged Matilda in Winchester. The princess, being hard pressed by famine, made her escape; but in the flight, earl Robert, her brother, fell into the hands of the enemy. This nobleman, though a subject, was as much the life and soul of his own party, as Stephen was of the other; and the empress, sensible of his merit and importance, consented to exchange the prisoners on equal terms. The civil war was again kindled with greater fury than ever.

1141.

Stephen released.

EARL Robert, finding the successes on both sides nearly balanced, went over to Normandy, which, during Stephen's captivity, had submitted to the earl of Anjou; and he persuaded Geoffrey to allow his eldest son Henry, a young prince of great hopes, to take a journey into England, and appear at the head of his partisans. This expedient, however, produced nothing decisive. Stephen took Oxford after a long siege: He was defeated by earl Robert at Wilton: And the empress, though of a masculine spirit, yet being harassed with a variety of good and bad fortune, and alarmed with continual dangers to her person and family, at last retired into Normandy, whither she had sent her son some time before. The death of her brother, which happened nearly about the same time, would have proved fatal to her interests, had not some incidents occurred, which checked the course of Stephen's prosperity. This prince, finding that the castles built by the noblemen of his own party encouraged the

1142.

1143.

1146.

Continuation of the civil wars.

CHAP. VII. 1146. the ſpirit of independence, and were little leſs dangerous than thoſe which remained in the hands of the enemy, endeavoured to extort from them a ſurrender of thoſe fortreſſes; and he alienated the affections of many of them by this equitable demand. The artillery alſo of the church, which his brother had brought over to his ſide, had, after ſome interval, joined the other party. Eugenius III. had mounted the papal throne; the biſhop of Wincheſter was deprived of the legantine commiſſion, which was conferred on Theobald archbiſhop of Canterbury, the enemy and rival of the former legate. That pontiff alſo, having ſummoned a general council at Rheims in Champagne, inſtead of allowing the church of England, as had been uſual, to elect its own deputies, nominated five Engliſh biſhops to repreſent that church, and required their attendance in the council. Stephen, who, notwithſtanding his preſent difficulties, was jealous of the rights of his crown, refuſed them permiſſion to attend[i]; and the pope, ſenſible of his advantage in contending with a prince who reigned by a diſputed title, took revenge by laying all Stephen's party
1147. under an interdict[k]. The diſcontents of the royaliſts, at being thrown into this ſituation, were augmented by a compariſon with Matilda's party, who enjoyed all the benefits of the ſacred ordinances; and Stephen was at laſt obliged, by making proper ſubmiſſions to the ſee of Rome, to remove the reproach from his party[l].

1148. The weakneſs of both ſides, rather than any decreaſe of mutual animoſity, having produced a tacit ceſſation of arms in England, many of the nobility, Roger de Moubray, William de Warrenne, and others, finding no opportunity to exert their military ardour at home, inliſted themſelves in a new cruſade, which with ſurpriſing ſucceſs, after former

i Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 225. k Chron. W. Thorn. p. 1807.
l Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 226.

 diſap-

disappointments and misfortunes, was now preached by St. Bernard[m]. But an event soon after happened which threatened a revival of hostilities in England. 1148. Prince Henry, who had reached his sixteenth year, was desirous of receiving the honour of knighthood; a ceremony which every gentleman in that age passed through before he was admitted to the use of arms, and which was even deemed requisite for the greatest princes. He intended to receive his admission from his great-uncle, David king of Scotland; and for that purpose he passed through England with a great retinue, and was attended by the most considerable of his partisans. He remained some time with the king of Scotland; made incursions into England; and by his dexterity and vigour in all manly exercises, by his valour in war, and his prudent conduct in every occurrence, he roused the hopes of his party, and gave symptoms of those great qualities which he afterwards displayed when he mounted the throne of England. Soon after his return to Normandy, he was, by Matilda's 1150. consent, invested in that dutchy; and upon the death of his father Geoffrey, which happened in the subsequent year, he took possession both of Anjou and Maine, and concluded a marriage, which brought him a great accession of power, and rendered him extremely formidable to his rival. Eleanor, the daughter and heir of William duke of Guienne, and earl of Poictou, had been married sixteen years to Lewis VII. king of France, and had attended him in a crusade, which that monarch conducted against the infidels: But having there lost the affections of her husband, and even fallen under some suspicion of gallantry with a handsome Saracen, Lewis, more delicate than polite, procured a divorce from her, and restored her those rich provinces, which by her marriage she had annexed to

[m] Hagulst. p. 275, 276.

the

CHAP. VII. 1152. the crown of France. Young Henry, neither discouraged by the inequality of years, nor by the reports of Eleanor's gallantries, made succefsful courtship to that princefs, and, efpoufing her fix weeks after her divorce, got poffeffion of all her dominions as her dowry. The luftre which he received from this acquifition, and the profpect of his rifing fortune, had fuch an effect in England, that when Stephen, defirous to enfure the crown to his fon Euftace, required the archbifhop of Canterbury to anoint that prince as his fucceffor, the primate refufed compliance, and made his efcape beyond fea, to avoid the violence and refentment of Stephen.

1153. HENRY, informed of thefe difpofitions in the people, made an invafion on England: Having gained fome advantage over Stephen at Malmefbury, and having taken that place, he proceeded thence to throw fuccours into Wallingford, which the king had advanced with a fuperior army to befiege. A decifive action was every day expected; when the great men of both fides, terrified at the profpect of farther bloodfhed and confufion, interpofed with their good offices, and fet on foot a negociation between the rival princes. The death of Euftace, during the courfe of the treaty, facilitated its conclufion: An accommodation was fettled, by which it was agreed, that Stephen fhould poffefs the crown during his lifetime, that juftice fhould be adminiftered in his name, even in the provinces which had fubmitted to Henry, and that this latter prince fhould, on Stephen's demife, fucceed to the kingdom, and William, Stephen's fon, to Boulogne and his patrimonial eftate. After all the barons had fworn to the obfervance of this treaty, and done homage to Henry, as to the heir of the crown, that prince evacuated the kingdom; and the death of Stephen, which happened the next year, after a fhort illnefs, prevented all thofe quarrels and jealoufies,

Compromife between the king and prince Henry.

Death of the king. 1154. Octob. 25.

loufies, which were likely to have enfued in fo delicate a fituation.

ENGLAND fuffered great miferies during the reign of this prince: But his perfonal character, allowing for the temerity and injuftice of his ufurpation, appears not liable to any great exception; and he feems to have been well qualified, had he fucceeded by a juft title, to have promoted the happinefs and profperity of his fubjects [n]. He was poffeffed of induftry, activity, and courage, to a great degree; though not endowed with a found judgment, he was not deficient in abilities; he had the talent of gaining men's affections; and, notwithftanding his precarious fituation, he never indulged himfelf in the exercife of any cruelty or revenge [o]. His advancement to the throne procured him neither tranquillity nor happinefs; and though the fituation of England prevented the neighbouring ftates from taking any durable advantage of her confufions, her inteftine diforders were to the laft degree ruinous and deftructive. The court of Rome was alfo permitted, during thofe civil wars, to make farther advances in her ufurpations; and appeals to the pope, which had always been ftrictly prohibited by the Englifh laws, became now common in every ecclefiaftical controverfy [p].

[n] W. Malmef. p. 180. [o] M. Paris, p. 51. Hagul. p. 312.
[p] H. Hunt. p. 395.

CHAP. VIII.

HENRY II.

State of Europe——of France——First acts of Henry's government——Disputes between the civil and ecclesiastical powers——Thomas a Becket, archbishop of Canterbury——Quarrel between the king and Becket——Constitutions of Clarendon——Banishment of Becket——Compromise with him——His return from banishment——His murder——Grief——and submission of the king.

CHAP. VIII.

1154.

State of Europe.

THE extensive confederacies, by which the European potentates are now at once united and set in opposition to each other, and which, though they are apt to diffuse the least spark of dissension throughout the whole, are at least attended with this advantage, that they prevent any violent revolutions or conquests in particular states, were totally unknown in ancient ages; and the theory of foreign politics in each kingdom formed a speculation much less complicated and involved than at present. Commerce had not yet bound together the most distant nations in so close a chain: Wars, finished in one campaign and often in one battle, were little affected by the movements of remote states: The imperfect communication among the kingdoms, and their ignorance of each other's situation, made it impracticable for a great number of them to combine in one project or effort: And above all, the turbulent spirit and independent situation of the barons or great vassals in each state gave so much occupation to the sovereign, that he was obliged to confine his attention chiefly to his own state and his own system of government, and was more

more indifferent about what paſſed among his neighbours. Religion alone, not politics, carried abroad the views of princes; while it either fixed their thoughts on the Holy Land, whoſe conqueſt and defence was deemed a point of common honour and intereſt, or engaged them in intrigues with the Roman pontiff, to whom they had yielded the direction of eccleſiaſtical affairs, and who was every day aſſuming more authority than they were willing to allow him. CHAP. VIII. 1154.

BEFORE the conqueſt of England by the duke of Normandy, this iſland was as much ſeparated from the reſt of the world in politics as in ſituation; and except from the inroads of the Daniſh pirates, the Engliſh, happily confined at home, had neither enemies nor allies on the continent. The foreign dominions of William connected them with the king and great vaſſals of France; and while the oppoſite pretenſions of the pope and emperor in Italy produced a continual intercourſe between Germany and that country, the two great monarchs of France and England formed, in another part of Europe, a ſeparate ſyſtem, and carried on their wars and negociations, without meeting either with oppoſition or ſupport from the others.

State of France.

ON the decline of the Carlovingian race, the nobles in every province of France, taking advantage of the weakneſs of the ſovereign, and obliged to provide, each for his own defence, againſt the ravages of the Norman freebooters, had aſſumed, both in civil and military affairs, an authority almoſt independent, and had reduced within very narrow limits the prerogative of their princes. The acceſſion of Hugh Capet, by annexing a great fief to the crown, had brought ſome addition to the royal dignity; but this fief, though conſiderable for a ſubject, appeared a narrow baſis of power for a prince who was placed at the head of ſo great a community. The royal demeſnes conſiſted only of

 Paris,

CHAP. VIII. 1154.

Paris, Orleans, Eſtampes, Compiegne, and a few places ſcattered over the northern provinces: In the reſt of the kingdom, the prince's authority was rather nominal than real: The vaſſals were accuſtomed, nay entitled, to make war without his permiſſion, on each other: They were even entitled, if they conceived themſelves injured, to turn their arms againſt their ſovereign: They exerciſed all civil juriſdiction, without appeal, over their tenants and inferior vaſſals: Their common jealouſy of the crown eaſily united them againſt any attempt on their exorbitant privileges; and as ſome of them had attained the power and authority of great princes, even the ſmalleſt baron was ſure of immediate and effectual protection. Beſides ſix eccleſiaſtical peerages, which, with the other immunities of the church, cramped extremely the general execution of juſtice; there were ſix lay peerages, Burgundy, Normandy, Guienne, Flanders, Toulouſe, and Champagne, which formed very extenſive and puiſſant ſovereignties. And though the combination of all thoſe princes and barons could, on urgent occaſions, muſter a mighty power; yet was it very difficult to ſet that great machine in movement; it was almoſt impoſſible to preſerve harmony in its parts; a ſenſe of common intereſt alone could, for a time, unite them under their ſovereign againſt a common enemy; but if the king attempted to turn the force of the community againſt any mutinous vaſſal, the ſame ſenſe of common intereſt made the others oppoſe themſelves to the ſucceſs of his pretenſions. Lewis the Groſs, the laſt ſovereign, marched at one time to his frontiers againſt the Germans at the head of an army of two hundred thouſand men; but a petty lord of Corbeil, of Puiſet, of Couci, was able, at another period, to ſet that prince at defiance, and to maintain open war againſt him.

THE authority of the Engliſh monarch was much more extenſive within his kingdom, and the diſpro-

portion

portion much greater between him and the moſt powerful of his vaſſals. His demeſnes and revenue were large, compared to the greatneſs of his ſtate: He was accuſtomed to levy arbitrary exactions on his ſubjects: His courts of judicature extended their juriſdiction into every part of the kingdom: He could cruſh by his power, or by a judicial ſentence, well or ill founded, any obnoxious baron: And though the feudal inſtitutions which prevailed in his kingdom, had the ſame tendency as in other ſtates, to exalt the ariſtocracy and depreſs the monarchy, it required, in England, according to its preſent conſtitution, a great combination of the vaſſals to oppoſe their ſovereign lord, and there had not hitherto ariſen any baron ſo powerful as of himſelf to levy war againſt the prince, and afford protection to the inferior barons. CHAP. VIII. 1154.

While ſuch were the different ſituations of France and England, and the latter enjoyed ſo many advantages above the former; the acceſſion of Henry II. a prince of great abilities, poſſeſſed of ſo many rich provinces on the continent, might appear an event dangerous, if not fatal, to the French monarchy, and ſufficient to break entirely the balance between the ſtates. He was maſter, in the right of his father, of Anjou and Touraine; in that of his mother, of Normandy and Maine; in that of his wife, of Guienne, Poictou, Xaintogne, Auvergne, Périgord, Angoumois, the Limouſin. He ſoon after annexed Britanny to his other ſtates, and was already poſſeſſed of the ſuperiority over that province, which, on the firſt ceſſion of Normandy to Rollo the Dane, had been granted by Charles the Simple in vaſſalage to that formidable ravager. Theſe provinces compoſed above a third of the whole French monarchy, and were much ſuperior in extent and opulence to thoſe territories which were ſubjected to the immediate juriſdiction and government of the king. The vaſſal was here more

CHAP. VIII. 1154. powerful than his liege lord: The ſituation which had enabled Hugh Capet to depoſe the Carlovingian princes, ſeemed to be renewed, and that with much greater advantages on the ſide of the vaſſal: And when England was added to ſo many provinces, the French king had reaſon to apprehend, from this conjuncture, ſome great diſaſter to himſelf and to his family: But, in reality, it was this circumſtance, which appeared ſo formidable, that ſaved the Capetian race, and by its conſequences exalted them to that pitch of grandeur which they at preſent enjoy.

THE limited authority of the prince in the feudal conſtitutions, prevented the king of England from employing with advantage the force of ſo many ſtates, which were ſubjected to his government; and theſe different members, disjoined in ſituation, and diſagreeing in laws, language, and manners, were never thoroughly cemented into one monarchy. He ſoon became, both from his diſtant place of reſidence, and from the incompatibility of intereſts, a kind of foreigner to his French dominions; and his ſubjects on the continent conſidered their allegiance as more naturally due to their ſuperior lord, who lived in their neighbourhood, and who was acknowledged to be the ſupreme head of their nation. He was always at hand to invade them; their immediate lord was often at too great a diſtance to protect them; and any diſorder in any part of his diſperſed dominions gave advantages againſt him. The other powerful vaſſals of the French crown were rather pleaſed to ſee the expulſion of the Engliſh, and were not affected with that jealouſy which would have ariſen from the oppreſſion of a co-vaſſal who was of the ſame rank with themſelves. By this means, the king of France found it more eaſy to conquer thoſe numerous provinces from England, than to ſubdue a duke of Normandy or Guienne, a count of Anjou, Maine,

or Poictou. And after reducing such extensive territories, which immediately incorporated with the body of the monarchy, he found greater facility in uniting to the crown the other great fiefs which still remained separate and independent. CHAP. VIII. 1154.

But as these important consequences could not be foreseen by human wisdom, the king of France remarked with terror the rising grandeur of the house of Anjou or Plantagenet; and, in order to retard its progress, he had ever maintained a strict union with Stephen, and had endeavoured to support the tottering fortunes of that bold usurper. But after this prince's death it was too late to think of opposing the succession of Henry, or preventing the performance of those stipulations which, with the unanimous consent of the nation, he had made with his predecessor. The English, harassed with civil wars, and disgusted with the bloodshed and depredations which, during the course of so many years, had attended them, were little disposed to violate their oaths, by excluding the lawful heir from the succession of their monarchy [q]. Many of the most considerable fortresses were in the hands of his partisans; the whole nation had had occasion to see the noble qualities with which he was endowed [r], and to compare them with the mean talents of William, the son of Stephen; and as they were acquainted with his great power, and were rather pleased to see the accession of so many foreign dominions to the crown of England, they never entertained the least thoughts of resisting them. Henry himself, sensible of the advantages attending his present situation, was in no hurry to arrive in England; and being engaged in the siege of a castle on the frontiers of Normandy, when he received intelligence of Stephen's death, he made it a point of honour not to depart from his enterprise, till he

[q] Matth. Paris, p. 65. [r] Gul. Neubr. p. 381.

CHAP. VIII. 1154. 8th Dec.

had brought it to an iſſue. He then ſet out on his journey, and was received in England with the acclamations of all orders of men, who ſwore with pleaſure the oath of fealty and allegiance to him.

1155. Firſt acts of Henry's government.

THE firſt act of Henry's government correſponded to the high idea entertained of his abilities, and prognoſticated the re-eſtabliſhment of juſtice and tranquillity, of which the kingdom had ſo long been bereaved. He immediately diſmiſſed all thoſe mercenary ſoldiers who had committed great diſorders in the nation; and he ſent them abroad, together with William of Ypres, their leader, the friend and confident of Stephen [s]. He revoked all the grants made by his predeceſſor [t], even thoſe which neceſſity had extorted from the empreſs Matilda; and that princeſs, who had reſigned her rights in favour of Henry, made no oppoſition to a meaſure ſo neceſſary for ſupporting the dignity of the crown. He repaired the coin, which had been extremely debaſed during the reign of his predeceſſor; and he took proper meaſures againſt the return of a like abuſe [u]. He was rigorous in the execution of juſtice, and in the ſuppreſſion of robbery and violence; and that he might reſtore authority to the laws, he cauſed all the new-erected caſtles to be demoliſhed, which had proved ſo many ſanctuaries to freebooters and rebels [w]. The earl of Albemarle, Hugh Mortimer, and Roger the ſon of Milo of Glouceſter, were inclined to make ſome reſiſtance to this ſalutary meaſure; but the approach of the king with his forces ſoon obliged them to ſubmit.

1156.

EVERY thing being reſtored to full tranquillity in England, Henry went abroad in order to oppoſe the attempts of his brother Geoffrey, who, during his abſence, had made an incurſion into

s Fitz-Steph. p. 13. M. Paris, p. 65. Neubr. p. 381. Chron. T. Wykes, p. 30. t Neubr. p. 382. u Hoveden, p. 491.
w Hoveden, p. 491. Fitz-Steph. p. 13. M. Paris, p. 65. Neubr. p. 381. Brompton, p. 1043.

Anjou

Anjou and Maine, had advanced ſome pretenſions to thoſe provinces, and had got poſſeſſion of a conſiderable part of them *. On the king's appearance, the people returned to their allegiance; and Geoffrey, reſigning his claim for an annual penſion of a thouſand pounds, departed and took poſſeſſion of the county of Nantz, which the inhabitants, who had expelled count Hoel their prince, had put into his hands. Henry returned to England the following year: The incurſions of the Welſh then provoked him to make an invaſion upon them; where the natural faſtneſſes of the country occaſioned him great difficulties, and even brought him into danger. His vanguard, being engaged in a narrow paſs, was put to rout: Henry de Eſſex, the hereditary ſtandard-bearer, ſeized with a panic, threw down the ſtandard, took to flight, and exclaimed that the king was ſlain: And had not the prince immediately appeared in perſon, and led on his troops with great gallantry, the conſequence might have proved fatal to the whole army [x]. For this miſbehaviour, Eſſex was afterwards accuſed of felony by Robert de Montfort; was vanquiſhed in ſingle combat; his eſtate was confiſcated; and he himſelf was thruſt into a convent [y]. The ſubmiſſions of the Welſh procured them an accommodation with England.

CHAP. VIII. 1157.

THE martial diſpoſition of the princes in that age engaged them to head their own armies in every enterpriſe, even the moſt frivolous; and their feeble authority made it commonly impracticable for them to delegate, on occaſion, the command to their generals. Geoffrey, the king's brother, died ſoon after he had acquired poſſeſſion of Nantz: Though he had no other title to that county than the voluntary ſubmiſſion or election of the inhabitants two years before, Henry laid claim to the territory as 1158.

* See note [O] at the end of the volume. [x] Neubr. p. 383. Chron. W. Heming. p. 492. [y] M. Paris, p. 70. Neubr. p. 383.

devolved

CHAP. VIII. 1158.

devolved to him by hereditary right, and he went over to ſupport his pretenſions by force of arms. Conan, duke or earl of Britanny (for theſe titles are given indifferently by hiſtorians to thoſe princes), pretended that Nantz had been lately ſeparated by rebellion from his principality, to which of right it belonged; and immediately on Geoffrey's death he took poſſeſſion of the diſputed territory. Leſt Lewis the French king ſhould interpoſe in the controverſy, Henry paid him a viſit; and ſo illured him by careſſes and civilities, that an alliance was contracted between them; and they agreed that young Henry, heir to the Engliſh monarchy, ſhould be affianced to Margaret of France; though the former was only five years of age, the latter was ſtill in her cradle. Henry, now ſecure of meeting with no interruption on this ſide, advanced with his army into Britanny; and Conan, in deſpair of being able to make reſiſtance, delivered up the county of Nantz to him. The able conduct of the king procured him farther and more important advantages from this incident. Conan, haraſſed with the turbulent diſpoſition of his ſubjects, was deſirous of procuring to himſelf the ſupport of ſo great a monarch; and he betrothed his daughter and only child, yet an infant, to Geoffrey the king's third ſon, who was of the ſame tender years. The duke of Britanny died about ſeven years after; and Henry, being *meſne* lord, and alſo natural guardian to his ſon and daughter-in-law, put himſelf in poſſeſſion of that principality, and annexed it for the preſent to his other great dominions.

1159. THE king had a proſpect of making ſtill farther acquiſitions; and the activity of his temper ſuffered no opportunity of that kind to eſcape him. Philippa, ducheſs of Guienne, mother of queen Eleanor, was the only iſſue of William IV. count of Toulouſe; and would have inherited his dominions, had not that prince, deſirous of preſerving the ſucceſſion

cession in the male-line, conveyed the principality to his brother Raymond de St. Gilles, by a contract of sale which was in that age regarded as fictitious and illusory. By this means the title to the county of Toulouse came to be disputed between the male and female heirs; and the one or the other, as opportunities favoured them, had obtained possession. Raymond, grandson of Raymond de St. Gilles, was the reigning sovereign; and on Henry's reviving his wife's claim, this prince had recourse for protection to the king of France, who was so much concerned in policy to prevent the farther aggrandizement of the English monarch. Lewis himself, when married to Eleanor, had asserted the justice of her claim, and had demanded possession of Toulouse [z]; but his sentiments changing with his interest, he now determined to defend by his power and authority the title of Raymond. Henry found that it would be requisite to support his pretensions against potent antagonists; and that nothing but a formidable army could maintain a claim which he had in vain asserted by arguments and manifestos.

CHAP. VIII.

1159.

An army, composed of feudal vassals, was commonly very intractable and undisciplined, both because of the independent spirit of the persons who served in it, and because the commands were not given, either by the choice of the sovereign, or from the military capacity and experience of the officers. Each baron conducted his own vassals: His rank was greater or less, proportioned to the extent of his property: Even the supreme command under the prince was often attached to birth: And as the military vassals were obliged to serve only forty days at their own charge; though, if the expedition were distant, they were put to great expence; the prince reaped little benefit from their attendance. Henry, sensible of these inconveniencies, levied upon his

[z] Neubr. p. 387. Chron. W. Heming. p. 494.

vassals

CHAP. VIII. 1159.

vassals in Normandy, and other provinces which were remote from Toulouse, a sum of money in lieu of their service; and this commutation, by reason of the great distance, was still more advantageous to his English vassals. He imposed, therefore, a scutage of 180,000 pounds on the knight's fees, a commutation to which, though it was unusual, and the first perhaps to be met with in history*, the military tenants willingly submitted; and with this money he levied an army which was more under his command, and whose service was more durable and constant. Assisted by Berenger count of Barcelona, and Trincaval count of Nismes, whom he had gained to his party, he invaded the county of Toulouse; and after taking Verdun, Castlenau, and other places, he besieged the capital of the province, and was likely to prevail in the enterprise; when Lewis, advancing before the arrival of his main body, threw himself into the place with a small reinforcement. Henry was urged by some of his ministers to prosecute the siege, to take Lewis prisoner, and to impose his own terms in the pacification; but he either thought it so much his interest to maintain the feudal principles, by which his foreign dominions were secured, or bore so much respect to his superior lord, that he declared he would not attack a place defended by him in person; and he immediately raised the siege[a]. He marched into Normandy to protect that province against an incursion which the count of Dreux, instigated by king Lewis his brother, had made upon it. War was now openly carried on between the two monarchs, but produced no memorable event: It soon ended in a cessation of arms, and that followed by a peace, which was not, however, attended with any confidence or good correspondence between those rival princes. The fortress of Gisors, being part

* Madox, p. 435. Gervase, p. 1381. See note [P] at the end of the volume. [a] Fitz-Steph. p. 22. Diceto, p. 531.

of

of the dowry ſtipulated to Margaret of France, had been conſigned by agreement to the knights templars, on condition that it ſhould be delivered into Henry's hands after the celebration of the nuptials. 1160. The king, that he might have a pretence for immediately demanding the place, ordered the marriage to be ſolemnized between the prince and princeſs, though both infants [b]; and he engaged the grand-maſter of the templars, by large preſents, as was generally ſuſpected, to put him in poſſeſſion of Giſors [c]. Lewis, reſenting this fraudulent conduct, baniſhed the templars, and would have made war 1161. upon the king of England, had it not been for the mediation and authority of pope Alexander III. who had been chaſed from Rome by the anti-pope Victor IV. and reſided at that time in France. That we may form an idea of the authority poſſeſſed by the Roman pontiff during thoſe ages, it may be proper to obſerve that the two kings had, the year before, met the pope at the caſtle of Torci on the Loir; and they gave him ſuch marks of reſpect, that both diſmounted to receive him, and holding each of them one of the reins of his bridle, walked on foot by his ſide, and conducted him in that ſubmiſſive manner into the caſtle [d]. *A ſpectacle*, cries Baronius in an ecſtacy, *to God, angels, and men; and ſuch as had never before been exhibited to the world!*

HENRY, ſoon after he had accommodated his differences with Lewis by the pope's mediation, re- 1162. turned to England; where he commenced an enterpriſe, which, though required by ſound policy, and even conducted in the main with prudence, bred

[b] Hoveden, p. 492. Neubr. p. 400. Diceto, p. 532. Brompton, p. 1450.

[c] Since the firſt publication of this hiſtory, Lord Lyttelton has publiſhed a copy of the treaty between Henry and Lewis, by which it appears, if there was no ſecret article, that Henry was not guilty of any fraud in this tranſaction.

[d] Trivet, p. 48.

him

CHAP. VIII. 1162. Disputes between the civil and ecclesiastical powers.

him great disquietude, involved him in danger, and was not concluded without some loss and dishonour.

The usurpations of the clergy, which had at first been gradual, were now become so rapid, and had mounted to such a height, that the contest between the regale and pontificale was really arrived at a crisis in England; and it became necessary to determine whether the king or the priests, particularly the archbishop of Canterbury, should be sovereign of the kingdom[c]. The aspiring spirit of Henry, which gave inquietude to all his neighbours, was not likely long to pay a tame submission to the encroachments of subjects; and as nothing opens the eyes of men so readily as their interest, he was in no danger of falling, in this respect, into that abject superstition which retained his people in subjection. From the commencement of his reign, in the government of his foreign dominions, as well as of England, he had shown a fixed purpose to repress clerical usurpations, and to maintain those prerogatives which had been transmitted to him by his predecessors. During the schism of the papacy between Alexander and Victor, he had determined, for some time, to remain neuter: And when informed that the archbishop of Roüen and the bishop of Mans had, from their own authority, acknowledged Alexander as legitimate pope, he was so enraged, that though he spared the archbishop on account of his great age, he immediately issued orders for overthrowing the houses of the bishop of Mans and archdeacon of Roüen *; and it was not till he had deliberately examined the matter, by those views which usually enter into the councils of princes, that he allowed that pontiff to exercise authority over any of his dominions. In England, the mild character and advanced years of Theobald,

[c] Fitz-Stephen, p. 27.

* See note [Q] at the end of the volume.

archbishop

archbishop of Canterbury, together with his merits in refusing to put the crown on the head of Eustace, son of Stephen, prevented Henry, during the lifetime of that primate, from taking any measures against the multiplied encroachments of the clergy: But after his death, the king resolved to exert himself with more activity; and that he might be secure against any opposition, he advanced to that dignity Becket, his chancellor, on whose compliance he thought he could entirely depend. CHAP. VIII. 1162.

June 3. Thomas a Becket, archbishop of Canterbury.

Thomas a Becket, the first man of English descent who, since the Norman conquest, had, during the course of a whole century, risen to any considerable station, was born of reputable parents in the city of London; and being endowed both with industry and capacity, he early insinuated himself into the favour of archbishop Theobald, and obtained from that prelate some preferments and offices. By their means he was enabled to travel for improvement to Italy, where he studied the civil and canon law at Bologna; and on his return he appeared to have made such proficiency in knowledge, that he was promoted by his patron to the archdeaconry of Canterbury, an office of considerable trust and profit. He was afterwards employed with success by Theobald in transacting business at Rome; and on Henry's accession he was recommended to that monarch as worthy of farther preferment. Henry, who knew that Becket had been instrumental in supporting that resolution of the archbishop, which had tended so much to facilitate his own advancement to the throne, was already prepossessed in his favour; and finding, on farther acquaintance, that his spirit and abilities entitled him to any trust, he soon promoted him to the dignity of chancellor, one of the first civil offices in the kingdom. The chancellor, in that age, besides the custody of the great seal, had possession of all vacant prelacies and abbies; he was the guardian of

CHAP. VIII. 1162. of all such minors and pupils as were the king's tenants; all baronies which escheated to the crown were under his administration; he was entitled to a place in council, even though he were not particularly summoned; and as he exercised also the office of secretary of state, and it belonged to him to countersign all commissions, writs, and letters-patent, he was a kind of prime minister, and was concerned in the dispatch of every business of importance[f]. Besides exercising this high office, Becket, by the favour of the king or archbishop, was made provost of Beverley, dean of Hastings, and constable of the Tower: He was put in possession of the honours of Eye and Berkham, large baronies that had escheated to the crown: And to complete his grandeur, he was entrusted with the education of prince Henry, the king's eldest son, and heir of the monarchy[g]. The pomp of his retinue, the sumptuousness of his furniture, the luxury of his table, the munificence of his presents, corresponded to these great preferments; or rather exceeded any thing that England had ever before seen in any subject. His historian and secretary, Fitz-Stephens[h], mentions, among other particulars, that his apartments were every day in winter covered with clean straw or hay, and in summer with green rushes or boughs; lest the gentlemen who paid court to him, and who could not, by reason of their great number, find a place at table, should soil their fine clothes by sitting on a dirty floor[i]. A great number of knights were retained in his service; the greatest barons were proud of being received at his table; his house was a place of education for the

[f] Fitz-Steph. p. 13. [g] Ibid. p. 15. Hist. Quad. p. 9:4.
[h] P. 15.
[i] John Baldwin held the manor of Oterasfee in Aylesbury of the king in soccage, by the service of finding litter for the king's bed, viz. in summer, grass or herbs, and two grey geese; and in winter, straw, and three eels, thrice in the year, if the king should come thrice in the year to Aylesbury. Madox, Bar. Anglica, p. 247.

CHAP. VIII.

1162.

ſons of the chief nobility; and the king himſelf frequently vouchſafed to partake of his entertainments. As his way of life was ſplendid and opulent, his amuſements and occupations were gay, and partook of the cavalier ſpirit, which, as he had only taken deacon's orders, he did not think unbefitting his character. He employed himſelf at leiſure hours in hunting, hawking, gaming, and horſemanſhip; he expoſed his perſon in ſeveral military actions [k]; he carried over, at his own charge, ſeven hundred knights, to attend the king in his wars at Toulouſe; in the ſubſequent wars on the frontiers of Normandy he maintained, during forty days, twelve hundred knights, and four thouſand of their train [l]; and in an embaſſy to France, with which he was entruſted, he aſtoniſhed that court by the number and magnificence of his retinue.

Henry, beſides committing all his more important buſineſs to Becket's management, honoured him with his friendſhip and intimacy; and whenever he was diſpoſed to relax himſelf by ſports of any kind, he admitted his chancellor to the party [m]. An inſtance of their familiarity is mentioned by Fitz-Stephens, which, as it ſhews the manners of the age, it may not be improper to relate. One day, as the king and the chancellor were riding together in the ſtreets of London, they obſerved a beggar who was ſhivering with cold. Would it not be very praiſe-worthy, ſaid the king, to give that poor man a warm coat in this ſevere ſeaſon? It would, ſurely, replied the chancellor; and you do well, Sir, in thinking of ſuch good actions. Then he ſhall have one preſently, cried the king: And ſeizing the ſkirt of the chancellor's coat, which was ſcarlet, and lined with ermine, began to pull it violently. The chancellor defended himſelf for

[k] Fitz-Steph. p. 23. Hiſt. Quad. p. 9. [l] Fitz-Steph. p. 19, 20. 22, 23. [m] Ibid. p. 16. Hiſt. Quad. p. 8.

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some time; and they had both of them like to have tumbled off their horses in the street, when Becket, after a vehement struggle, let go his coat; which the king bestowed on the beggar, who, being ignorant of the quality of the persons, was not a little surprised at the present [n].

BECKET, who by his complaisance and good-humour had rendered himself agreeable, and by his industry and abilities useful to his master, appeared to him the fittest person for supplying the vacancy made by the death of Theobald. As he was well acquainted with the king's intentions [o] of retrenching, or rather confining within the ancient bounds, all ecclesiastical privileges, and always showed a ready disposition to comply with them [p], Henry, who never expected any resistance from that quarter, immediately issued orders for electing him archbishop of Canterbury. But this resolution, which was taken contrary to the opinion of Matilda, and many of the ministers [q], drew after it very unhappy consequences; and never prince of so great penetration appeared in the issue to have so little understood the genius and character of his minister.

No sooner was Becket installed in this high dignity, which rendered him for life the second person in the kingdom, with some pretensions of aspiring to be the first, than he totally altered his demeanor and conduct, and endeavoured to acquire the character of sanctity, of which his former busy and ostentatious course of life might, in the eyes of the people, have naturally bereaved him. Without consulting the king, he immediately returned into his hands the commission of chancellor; pretending that he must thenceforth detach himself from secular affairs, and be solely employed in the exercise of

[n] Fitz-Steph. p. 16. [o] Ibid. p. 17. [p] Ibid. p. 23. Epist. St. Thom. p. 232. [q] Epist. St. Thom. p. 167.

his

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his spiritual function; but in reality, that he might break off all connections with Henry, and apprise him, that Becket, as primate of England, was now become entirely a new personage. He maintained, in his retinue, and attendants alone, his ancient pomp and lustre, which was useful to strike the vulgar: In his own person he affected the greatest austerity and most rigid mortification, which he was sensible would have an equal or a greater tendency to the same end. He wore sack-cloth next his skin, which, by his affected care to conceal it, was necessarily the more remarked by all the world: He changed it so seldom, that it was filled with dirt and vermin: His usual diet was bread; his drink water, which he even rendered farther unpalatable by the mixture of unsavoury herbs: He tore his back with the frequent discipline which he inflicted on it: He daily on his knees washed, in imitation of Christ, the feet of thirteen beggars, whom he afterwards dismissed with presents[r]: He gained the affections of the monks by his frequent charities to the convents and hospitals: Every one who made profession of sanctity was admitted to his conversation, and returned full of panegyrics on the humility, as well as on the piety and mortification of the holy primate: He seemed to be perpetually employed in reciting prayers and pious lectures, or in perusing religious discourses: His aspect wore the appearance of seriousness and mental recollection, and secret devotion: And all men of penetration plainly saw that he was meditating some great design, and that the ambition and ostentation of his character had turned itself towards a new and more dangerous object.

1163. Quarrel between the king and Becket.

Becket waited not till Henry should commence those projects against the ecclesiastical power, which he knew had been formed by that prince: He was

[r] Fitz-Steph. p. 25. Hist. Quad. p. 19.

 himself

CHAP. VIII. 1163. himself the aggressor, and endeavoured to overawe the king by the intrepidity and boldness of his enterprises. He summoned the earl of Clare to surrender the barony of Tunbridge, which ever since the conquest had remained in the family of that nobleman; but which, as it had formerly belonged to the see of Canterbury, Becket pretended his predecessors were prohibited by the canons to alienate. The earl of Clare, besides the lustre which he derived from the greatness of his own birth, and the extent of his possessions, was allied to all the principal families in the kingdom; his sister, who was a celebrated beauty, had farther extended his credit among the nobility, and was even supposed to have gained the king's affections; and Becket could not better discover, than by attacking so powerful an interest, his resolution of maintaining with vigour the rights, real or pretended, of his see [s].

William de Eynsford, a military tenant of the crown, was patron of a living which belonged to a manor that held of the archbishop of Canterbury: but Becket, without regard to William's right, presented, on a new and legal pretext, one Laurence to that living, who was violently expelled by Eynsford. The primate making himself, as was usual in spiritual courts, both judge and party, issued in a summary manner the sentence of excommunication against Eynsford, who complained to the king that he who held *in capite* of the crown should, contrary to the practice established by the Conqueror, and maintained ever since by his successors, be subjected to that terrible sentence, without the previous consent of the sovereign [t]. Henry, who had now broken off all personal intercourse with Becket, sent him, by a messenger, his orders to absolve Eynsford; but received for answer, that it belonged not to the king to inform him whom he

[s] Fitz-Steph. p. 28. Gervase, p. 1384.
[t] M. Paris, p. 7. Diceto, p. 536.

should

ſhould abſolve and whom excommunicate[u]: And it was not till after many remonſtrances and menaces, that Becket, though with the worſt grace imaginable, was induced to comply with the royal mandate.

Henry, though he found himſelf thus grievouſly miſtaken in the character of the perſon whom he had promoted to the primacy, determined not to deſiſt from his former intention of retrenching clerical uſurpations. He was entirely maſter of his extenſive dominions: The prudence and vigour of his adminiſtration, attended with perpetual ſucceſs, had raiſed his character above that of any of his predeceſſors[w]: The papacy ſeemed to be weakened by a ſchiſm, which divided all Europe: And he rightly judged, that if the preſent favourable opportunity were neglected, the crown muſt, from the prevalent ſuperſtition of the people, be in danger of falling into an entire ſubordination under the mitre.

The union of the civil and eccleſiaſtical power ſerves extremely, in every civilized government, to the maintenance of peace and order; and prevents thoſe mutual encroachments which, as there can be no ultimate judge between them, are often attended with the moſt dangerous conſequences. Whether the ſupreme magiſtrate, who unites theſe powers, receives the appellation of prince or prelate, is not material: The ſuperior weight which temporal intereſts commonly bear in the apprehenſions of men above ſpiritual, renders the civil part of his character moſt prevalent; and in time prevents thoſe groſs impoſtures and bigoted perſecutions, which in all falſe religions are the chief foundation of clerical authority. But during the progreſs of eccleſiaſtical uſurpations, the ſtate, by the reſiſtance of the civil magiſtrate, is naturally thrown into convulſions; and it behoves the prince, both

[u] Fitz-Steph. p. 28. [w] Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 130.

CHAP. VIII. 1163. for his own intereſt, and for that of the public, to provide in time ſufficient barriers againſt ſo dangerous and inſidious a rival. This precaution had hitherto been much neglected in England, as well as in other catholic countries; and affairs at laſt ſeemed to have come to a dangerous criſis: A ſovereign of the greateſt abilities was now on the throne: A prelate of the moſt inflexible and intrepid character was poſſeſſed of the primacy: The contending powers appeared to be armed with their full force, and it was natural to expect ſome extraordinary event to reſult from their conflict.

AMONG their other inventions to obtain money, the clergy had inculcated the neceſſity of penance as an atonement for ſin; and having again introduced the practice of paying them large ſums as a commutation, or ſpecies of atonement for the remiſſion of thoſe penances, the ſins of the people, by theſe means, had become a revenue to the prieſts; and the king computed, that by this invention alone they levied more money upon his ſubjects than flowed, by all the funds and taxes, into the royal exchequer[x]. That he might eaſe the people of ſo heavy and arbitrary an impoſition, Henry required that a civil officer of his appointment ſhould be preſent in all eccleſiaſtical courts, and ſhould for the future give his conſent to every compoſition which was made with ſinners for their ſpiritual offences.

THE eccleſiaſtics in that age had renounced all immediate ſubordination to the magiſtrate: They openly pretended to an exemption in criminal accuſations from a trial before courts of juſtice; and were gradually introducing a like exemption in civil cauſes: Spiritual penalties alone could be inflicted on their offences: And as the clergy had extremely multiplied in England, and many of them were con-

[x] Fitz-Steph. p. 32.

ſequently

quently of very low characters, crimes of the deepeſt dye, murders, robberies, adulteries, rapes, were daily committed with impunity by the eccleſiaſtics. It had been found, for inſtance, on enquiry, that no leſs than a hundred murders had, ſince the king's acceſſion, been perpetrated by men of that profeſſion, who had never been called to account for theſe offences [y]; and holy orders were become a full protection for all enormities. A clerk in Worceſterſhire, having debauched a gentleman's daughter, had at this time proceeded to murder the father; and the general indignation againſt this crime moved the king to attempt the remedy of an abuſe which was become ſo palpable, and to require that the clerk ſhould be delivered up, and receive condign puniſhment from the magiſtrate [z]. Becket inſiſted on the privileges of the church; confined the criminal in the biſhop's priſon, leſt he ſhould be ſeized by the king's officers; maintained that no greater puniſhment could be inflicted on him than degradation: And when the king demanded, that immediately after he was degraded he ſhould be tried by the civil power, the primate aſſerted that it was iniquitous to try a man twice upon the ſame accuſation, and for the ſame offence [a].

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Henry laying hold of ſo plauſible a pretence, reſolved to puſh the clergy with regard to all their privileges, which they had raiſed to an enormous height, and to determine at once thoſe controverſies which daily multiplied between the civil and the eccleſiaſtical juriſdictions. He ſummoned an aſſembly of all the prelates of England; and he put to them this conciſe and deciſive queſtion, Whether or not they were willing to ſubmit to the ancient

[y] Neubr. p. 394. [z] Fitz-Steph. p. 33. Hiſt. Quad. p. 32.
[a] Fitz-Steph. p. 29. Hiſt. Quad. p. 33. 45. Hoveden, p. 492. M. Paris, p. 72. Diceto, p. 536, 537. Brompton, p. 1058. Gervaſe, p. 1384. Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 208, 209.

CHAP. VIII. 1163. laws and customs of the kingdom? The bishops unanimously replied, that they were willing, *saving their own order*[b]: A device by which they thought to elude the present urgency of the king's demand, yet reserve to themselves, on a favourable opportunity, the power of resuming all their pretensions. The king was sensible of the artifice, and was provoked to the highest indignation. He left the assembly with visible marks of his displeasure: He required the primate instantly to surrender the honours and castles of Eye and Berkham: The bishops were terrified, and expected still farther effects of his resentment. Becket alone was inflexible; and nothing but the interposition of the pope's legate and almoner, Philip, who dreaded a breach with so powerful a prince at so unseasonable a juncture, could have prevailed on him to retract the saving clause, and give a general and absolute promise of observing the ancient customs[c].

But Henry was not content with a declaration in these general terms: He resolved, ere it was too late, to define expresly those customs, with which he required compliance, and to put a stop to clerical usurpations before they were fully consolidated, and could plead antiquity, as they already did a sacred authority, in their favour. The claims of the church were open and visible. After a gradual and insensible progress during many centuries, the mask had at last been taken off, and several ecclesiastical councils, by their canons, which were pretended to be irrevocable and infallible, had positively defined those privileges and immunities, which gave such general offence, and appeared so dangerous to the civil magistrate. Henry therefore deemed it necessary to define with the same precision the limits of the civil power; to oppose his legal customs to their divine ordinances; to determine the exact boundaries

[b] Fitz-Steph. p. 31. Hist. Quad. p. 34. Hoveden, p. 492.
[c] Hist. Quad. p. 37. Hoveden, p. 493. Gervase, p. 1385.

daries of the rival jurisdictions; and for this purpose he summoned a general council of the nobility and prelates at Clarendon, to whom he submitted this great and important question. CHAP. VIII. 1164. 25th Jan.

THE barons were all gained to the king's party, either by the reasons which he urged, or by his superior authority: The bishops were overawed by the general combination against them: And the following laws, commonly called the *Constitutions of Clarendon*, were voted without opposition by this assembly [d]. It was enacted, that all suits concerning the advowson and presentation of churches should be determined in the civil courts: That the churches belonging to the king's fee should not be granted in perpetuity without his consent: That clerks accused of any crime should be tried in the civil courts: That no person, particularly no clergyman of any rank, should depart the kingdom without the king's licence: That excommunicated persons should not be bound to give security for continuing in their present place of abode: That laics should not be accused in spiritual courts, except by legal and reputable promoters and witnesses: That no chief tenant of the crown should be excommunicated, nor his lands be put under an interdict, except with the king's consent: That all appeals in spiritual causes should be carried from the archdeacon to the bishop, from the bishop to the primate, from him to the king; and should be carried no farther without the king's consent: That if any law-suit arose between a layman and a clergyman concerning a tenant, and it be disputed whether the land be a lay or an ecclesiastical fee, it should first be determined by the verdict of twelve lawful men to what class it belonged; and if it be found to be a lay-fee, the cause should finally be determined in

Constitutions of Clarendon.

[d] Fitz-Steph. p. 33.

the

CHAP. VIII. 1164. the civil courts: That no inhabitant in demesne should be excommunicated for non-appearance in a spiritual court, till the chief officer of the place where he resides be consulted, that he may compel him by the civil authority to give satisfaction to the church: That the archbishops, bishops, and other spiritual dignitaries, should be regarded as barons of the realm; should possess the privileges and be subjected to the burthens belonging to that rank; and should be bound to attend the king in his great councils, and assist at all trials, till the sentence, either of death or loss of members, be given against the criminal: That the revenue of vacant sees should belong to the king; the chapter, or such of them as he pleases to summon, should sit in the king's chapel till they made the new election with his consent, and that the bishop-elect should do homage to the crown: That if any baron or tenant *in capite* should refuse to submit to the spiritual courts, the king should employ his authority in obliging him to make such submissions; if any of them throw off his allegiance to the king, the prelates should assist the king with their censures in reducing him: That goods forfeited to the king should not be protected in churches or churchyards: That the clergy should no longer pretend to the right of enforcing payment of debts contracted by oath or promise; but should leave these law-suits, equally with others, to the determination of the civil courts: And that the sons of villains should not be ordained clerks, without the consent of their lord[e].

These articles, to the number of sixteen, were calculated to prevent the chief abuses which had prevailed in ecclesiastical affairs, and to put an effectual stop to the usurpations of the church, which, gradually stealing on, had threatened the total de-

[e] Hist. Quad. p. 163. M. Paris, p. 70, 71. Spelm. Conc. vol. ii. p. 63. Gervase, p. 1386, 1387. Wilkins, p. 321.

struction

ſtruction of the civil power. Henry, therefore, by reducing thoſe ancient cuſtoms of the realm to writing, and by collecting them in a body, endeavoured to prevent all future diſpute with regard to them; and by paſſing ſo many eccleſiaſtical ordinances in a national and civil aſſembly, he fully eſtabliſhed the ſuperiority of the legiſlature above all papal decrees or ſpiritual canons, and gained a ſignal victory over the eccleſiaſtics. But as he knew, that the biſhops, though overawed by the preſent combination of the crown and the barons, would take the firſt favourable opportunity of denying the authority which had enacted theſe conſtitutions, he reſolved that they ſhould all ſet their ſeal to them, and give a promiſe to obſerve them. None of the prelates dared to oppoſe his will; except Becket, who, though urged by the earls of Cornwal and Leiceſter, the barons of principal authority in the kingdom, obſtinately withheld his aſſent. At laſt, Richard de Haſtings, grand prior of the templars in England, threw himſelf on his knees before him; and with many tears entreated him, if he paid any regard either to his own ſafety or that of the church, not to provoke, by a fruitleſs oppoſition, the indignation of a great monarch, who was reſolutely bent on his purpoſe, and who was determined to take full revenge on every one that ſhould dare to oppoſe him [f]. Becket, finding himſelf deſerted by all the world, even by his own brethren, was at laſt obliged to comply; and he promiſed, *legally, with good faith, and without fraud or reſerve* [g], to obſerve the conſtitutions; and he took an oath to that purpoſe [h]. The king, thinking that he had now finally prevailed in this great enterpriſe, ſent the conſtitutions to pope Alexander, who then reſided in France; and he required that pontiff's ratifica-

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[f] Hiſt. Quad. p. 38. Hoveden, p. 493. [g] Fitz-Steph. p. 35. Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 25. [h] Fitz-Steph. p. 45. Hiſt. Quad. p. 39. Gervaſe, p. 1386.

tion

CHAP. VIII. 1164. tion of them: But Alexander, who, though he had owed the moſt important obligations to the king, plainly ſaw, that theſe laws were calculated to eſtabliſh the independency of England on the papacy, and of the royal power on the clergy, condemned them in the ſtrongeſt terms; abrogated, annulled, and rejected them. There were only ſix articles, the leaſt important, which, for the ſake of peace, he was willing to ratify.

Becket, when he obſerved that he might hope for ſupport in an oppoſition, expreſſed the deepeſt ſorrow for his compliance; and endeavoured to engage all the other biſhops in a confederacy to adhere to their common rights, and to the eccleſiaſtical privileges, in which he repreſented the intereſt and honour of God to be ſo deeply concerned. He redoubled his auſterities, in order to puniſh himſelf for his criminal conſent to the conſtitutions of Clarendon: He proportioned his diſcipline to the enormity of his ſuppoſed offence: And he refuſed to exerciſe any part of his archiepiſcopal function, till he ſhould receive abſolution from the pope; which was readily granted him. Henry, informed of his preſent diſpoſitions, reſolved to take vengeance for this refractory behaviour, and he attempted to cruſh him, by means of that very power which Becket made ſuch merit in ſupporting. He applied to the pope, that he ſhould grant the commiſſion of legate in his dominions to the archbiſhop of York; but Alexander, as politic as he, though he granted the commiſſion, annexed a clauſe, that it ſhould not impower the legate to execute any act in prejudice of the archbiſhop of Canterbury[i]: And the king, finding how fruitleſs ſuch an authority would prove, ſent back the commiſſion by the ſame meſſenger that brought it[k].

[i] Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 13, 14. [k] Hoveden, p. 493. Gervaſe, p. 1388.

THE

The primate, however, who found himſelf ſtill expoſed to the king's indignation, endeavoured twice to eſcape ſecretly from the kingdom; but was as often detained by contrary winds: And Henry haſtened to make him feel the effects of an obſtinacy, which he deemed ſo criminal. He inſtigated John, mareſchal of the exchequer, to ſue Becket in the archiepiſcopal court for ſome lands, part of the manor of Pageham; and to appeal thence to the king's court for juſtice [l]. On the day appointed for trying the cauſe, the primate ſent four knights to repreſent certain irregularities in John's appeal; and at the ſame time to excuſe himſelf, on account of ſickneſs, for not appearing perſonally that day in the court. This ſlight offence (if it even deſerve the name) was repreſented as a grievous contempt; the four knights were menaced, and with difficulty eſcaped being ſent to priſon, as offering falſehoods to the court *; and Henry, being determined to proſecute Becket to the utmoſt, ſummoned at Northampton a great council, which he purpoſed to make the inſtrument of his vengeance againſt the inflexible prelate. 1164.

The king had raiſed Becket from a low ſtation to the higheſt offices, had honoured him with his countenance and friendſhip, had truſted to his aſſiſtance in forwarding his favourite project againſt the clergy; and when he found him become of a ſudden his moſt rigid opponent, while every one beſide complied with his will, rage at the diſappointment, and indignation againſt ſuch ſignal ingratitude, tranſported him beyond all bounds of moderation; and there ſeems to have entered more of paſſion than of juſtice, or even of policy, in this violent proſecution [m]. The barons, notwithſtanding, in the great council, voted whatever ſentence he was pleaſed to dictate to them; and the biſhops themſelves,

[l] Hoveden, p. 494. M. Paris, p. 72. Diceto, p. 537.
* See note [R] at the end of the volume. [m] Neubr. p. 394.

who

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who undoubtedly bore a secret favour to Becket, and regarded him as the champion of their privileges, concurred with the rest, in the design of oppressing their primate. In vain did Becket urge, that his court was proceeding with the utmost regularity and justice in trying the mareschal's cause; which, however, he said, would appear from the sheriff's testimony to be entirely unjust and iniquitous: That he himself had discovered no contempt of the king's court; but, on the contrary, by sending four knights to excuse his absence, had virtually acknowledged its authority: That he also, in consequence of the king's summons, personally appeared at present in the great council, ready to justify his cause against the mareschal, and to submit his conduct to their enquiry and jurisdiction: That even should it be found that he had been guilty of non-appearance, the laws had affixed a very slight penalty to that offence: And that, as he was an inhabitant of Kent, where his archiepiscopal palace was seated, he was by law entitled to some greater indulgence than usual in the rate of his fine[n]. Notwithstanding these pleas, he was condemned as guilty of a contempt of the king's court, and as wanting in the fealty which he had sworn to his sovereign; all his goods and chattels were confiscated[o]; and that this triumph over the church might be carried to the utmost, Henry bishop of Winchester, the prelate who had been so powerful in the former reign, was, in spite of his remonstrances, obliged, by order of the court, to pronounce the sentence against him[p]. The primate submitted to the decree; and all the prelates, except Folliot, bishop of London, who paid court to the king by this singularity, became sureties for him[q]. It is remarkable, that several Norman barons voted in this council; and we may conclude,

[n] Fitz-Steph. p. 37. 42.
[o] Hist. Quad. p. 47. Hoveden, p. 494. Gervase, p. 1389.
[p] Fitz-Steph. p. 37.
[q] Ibid.

with

with some probability, that a like practice had prevailed in many of the great councils summoned since the conquest. For the contemporary historian, who has given us a full account of these transactions, does not mention this circumstance as any wise singular [r]; and Becket, in all his subsequent remonstrances, with regard to the severe treatment which he had met with, never founds any objection on an irregularity, which to us appears very palpable and flagrant. So little precision was there at that time in the government and constitution!

The king was not content with this sentence, however violent and oppressive. Next day, he demanded of Becket the sum of three hundred pounds, which the primate had levied upon the honours of Eye and Berkham, while in his possession. Becket, after premising that he was not obliged to answer to this suit, because it was not contained in his summons; after remarking that he had expended more than that sum in the repairs of those castles, and of the royal palace at London; expressed however his resolution, that money should not be any ground of quarrel between him and his sovereign: He agreed to pay the sum; and immediately gave sureties for it [s]. In the subsequent meeting, the king demanded five hundred marks, which, he affirmed, he had lent Becket during the war at Toulouse [t]; and another sum to the same amount, for which that prince had been surety for him to a Jew. Immediately after these two claims, he preferred a third of still greater importance: He required him to give in the accounts of his administration while chancellor, and to pay the balance due from the revenues of all the prelacies, abbies, and baronies, which had, during that time, been subjected to his management [u]. Becket observed, that, as this demand was totally unexpected, he had

[r] Fitz-Steph. p. 36. [s] Ibid. p. 38. [t] Hist. Quad. p. 47. [u] Hoveden, p. 494. Diceto, p. 537.

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not come prepared to anſwer it; but he required a delay, and promiſed in that caſe to give ſatisfaction, The king inſiſted upon ſureties; and Becket deſired leave to conſult his ſuffragans in a caſe of ſuch importance[w].

It is apparent, from the known character of Henry, and from the uſual vigilance of his government, that, when he promoted Becket to the ſee of Canterbury, he was, on good grounds, well pleaſed with his adminiſtration in the former high office with which he had entruſted him; and that, even if that prelate had diſſipated money beyond the income of his place, the king was ſatisfied that his expences were not blameable, and had in the main been calculated for his ſervice[x]. Two years had ſince elapſed; no demand had, during that time, been made upon him; it was not till the quarrel aroſe concerning eccleſiaſtical privileges, that the claim was ſtarted, and the primate was, of a ſudden, required to produce accounts of ſuch intricacy and extent before a tribunal which had ſhown a determined reſolution to ruin and oppreſs him. To find ſureties, that he ſhould anſwer ſo boundleſs and uncertain a claim, which in the king's eſtimation amounted to 44,000 marks[y], was impracticable; and Becket's ſuffragans were extremely at a loſs what counſel to give him in ſuch a critical emergency. By the advice of the biſhop of Wincheſter he offered two thouſand marks as a general ſatisfaction for all demands: But this offer was rejected by the king[z]. Some prelates exhorted him to reſign his ſee, on condition of receiving an acquittal: Others were of opinion, that he ought to ſubmit himſelf entirely to the king's mercy[a]: But the primate, thus puſhed to the utmoſt, had too much courage to ſink under oppreſſion: He de-

[w] Fitz-Steph. p. 38. [x] Hoveden, p. 495. [y] Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 315. [z] Fitz Steph. p. 38. [a] Fitz-Steph. p. 39. Gerváſe, p. 1390.

termined to brave all his enemies, to truſt to the ſacredneſs of his character for protection, to involve his cauſe with that of God and religion, and to ſtand the utmoſt efforts of royal indignation. CHAP. VIII. 1164.

After a few days ſpent in deliberation, Becket went to church, and ſaid maſs, where he had previouſly ordered, that the introit to the communion ſervice ſhould begin with theſe words, *Princes ſat and ſpake againſt me*; the paſſage appointed for the martyrdom of St. Stephen, whom the primate thereby tacitly pretended to reſemble in his ſufferings for the ſake of righteouſneſs. He went thence to court, arrayed in his ſacred veſtments: As ſoon as he arrived within the palace-gate, he took the croſs into his own hands, bore it aloft as his protection, and marched in that poſture into the royal apartments[b]. The king, who was in an inner room, was aſtoniſhed at this parade, by which the primate ſeemed to menace him and his court with the ſentence of excommunication; and he ſent ſome of the prelates to remonſtrate with him on account of ſuch audacious behaviour. Theſe prelates complained to Becket, that, by ſubſcribing himſelf to the conſtitutions of Clarendon, he had ſeduced them to imitate his example; and that now, when it was too late, he pretended to ſhake off all ſubordination to the civil power, and appeared deſirous of involving them in the guilt which muſt attend any violation of thoſe laws, eſtabliſhed by their conſent, and ratified by their ſubſcriptions[c]. Becket replied, that he had indeed ſubſcribed the conſtitutions of Clarendon, *legally, with good faith, and without fraud or reſerve*; but in theſe words was virtually implied a ſalvo for the rights of their order, which, being connected with the cauſe of God and his church, could never be relinquiſhed by their oaths and engagements: That if he and

[b] Fitz-Steph. p. 40. Hiſt. Quad. p. 53. Hoveden, p. 404. Neubr. p. 394. Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 43. [c] Fitz-Steph. p. 35.

CHAP. VIII. 1164.

they had erred in resigning the ecclesiastical privileges, the best atonement they could now make was to retract their consent, which, in such a case, could never be obligatory, and to follow the pope's authority, who had solemnly annulled the constitutions of Clarendon, and had absolved them from all oaths which they had taken to observe them: That a determined resolution was evidently embraced to oppress the church; the storm had first broken upon him; for a slight offence, and which too was falsely imputed to him, he had been tyrannically condemned to a grievous penalty; a new and unheard-of claim was since started, in which he could expect no justice; and he plainly saw, that he was the destined victim, who, by his ruin, must prepare the way for the abrogation of all spiritual immunities: That he strictly inhibited them who were his suffragans from assisting at any such trial, or giving their sanction to any sentence against him; he put himself and his see under the protection of the supreme pontiff; and appealed to him against any penalty which his iniquitous judges might think proper to inflict upon him: And that, however terrible the indignation of so great a monarch as Henry, his sword could only kill the body; while that of the church, entrusted into the hands of the primate, could kill the soul, and throw the disobedient into infinite and eternal perdition [d].

Appeals to the pope, even in ecclesiastical causes, had been abolished by the constitutions of Clarendon, and were become criminal by law; but an appeal in a civil cause, such as the king's demand upon Becket, was a practice altogether new and unprecedented; it tended directly to the subversion of the government, and could receive no colour of excuse, except from the determined resolution, which was but too apparent in Henry and the

[d] Fitz-Steph. p. 42. 44, 45, 46. Hist. Quad. p. 57. Hoveden, p. 495. M. Paris, p. 72. Epist. St. Thom. p. 45. 195.

great

great council, to effectuate, without juſtice, but under colour of law, the total ruin of the inflexible primate. The king, having now obtained a pretext ſo much more plauſible for his violence, would probably have puſhed the affair to the utmoſt extremity againſt him; but Becket gave him no leiſure to conduct the proſecution. He refuſed ſo much as to hear the ſentence, which the barons, ſitting apart from the biſhops, and joined to ſome ſheriffs and barons of the ſecond rank [e], had given upon the king's claim: He departed from the palace; aſked Henry's immediate permiſſion to leave Northampton; and upon meeting with a refuſal, he withdrew ſecretly; wandered about in diſguiſe for ſome time; and at laſt took ſhipping, and arrived ſafely at Gravelines.

Baniſhment of Becket.

THE violent and unjuſt proſecution of Becket had a natural tendency to turn the public favour on his ſide, and to make men overlook his former ingratitude towards the king, and his departure from all oaths and engagements, as well as the enormity of thoſe eccleſiaſtical privileges, of which he affected to be the champion. There were many other reaſons which procured him countenance and protection in foreign countries. Philip earl of Flanders [f], and Lewis king of France [g], jealous of the riſing greatneſs of Henry, were well pleaſed to give him diſturbance in his government; and forgetting that this was the common cauſe of princes, they affected to pity extremely the condition of the exiled primate; and the latter even honoured him with a viſit at Soiſſons, in which city he had invited him to fix his reſidence [h]. The pope, whoſe intereſts were more immediately concerned in ſupporting him,

[e] Fitz-Steph. p. 46. This hiſtorian is ſuppoſed to mean the more conſiderable vaſſals of the chief barons: Theſe had no title to ſit in the great council, and the giving them a place there was a palpable irregularity; which however is not inſiſted on in any of Becket's remonſtrances. A farther proof how little fixed the conſtitution was at that time. [f] Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 35. [g] Ibid. p. 36, 37.
[h] Hiſt. Quad. p. 76.

1164. gave a cold reception to a magnificent embaſſy which Henry ſent to accuſe him; while Becket himſelf, who had come to Sens in order to juſtify his cauſe before the ſovereign pontiff, was received with the greateſt marks of diſtinction. The king, in revenge, ſequeſtered the revenues of Canterbury; and by a conduct which might be eſteemed arbitrary, had there been at that time any regular check on royal authority, he baniſhed all the primate's relations and domeſtics, to the number of four hundred, whom he obliged to ſwear, before their departure, that they would inſtantly join their patron. But this policy, by which Henry endeavoured to reduce Becket ſooner to neceſſity, loſt its effect: The pope, when they arrived beyond ſea, abſolved them from their oath, and diſtributed them among the convents in France and Flanders: A reſidence was aſſigned to Becket himſelf in the convent of Pontigny, where he lived for ſome years in great magnificence, partly from a penſion granted him on the revenues of that abbey, partly from remittances made him by the French monarch.

1165. THE more to ingratiate himſelf with the pope, Becket reſigned into his hands the ſee of Canterbury, to which, he affirmed, he had been uncanonically elected by the authority of the royal mandate; and Alexander, in his turn, beſides inveſting him anew with that dignity, pretended to abrogate, by a bull, the ſentence which the great council of England had paſſed againſt him. Henry, after attempting in vain to procure a conference with the pope, who departed ſoon after for Rome, whither the proſperous ſtate of his affairs now invited him, made proviſions againſt the conſequences of that breach which impended between his kingdom and the apoſtolic ſee. He iſſued orders to his juſticiaries, inhibiting, under ſevere penalties, all appeals to the pope or archbiſhop; forbidding any one to receive any mandates from them, or apply in any caſe

case to their authority; declaring it treasonable to bring from either of them an interdict upon the kingdom, and punishable in secular clergymen by the loss of their eyes and by castration, in regulars by amputation of their feet, and in laics with death; and menacing with sequestration and banishment the persons themselves, as well as their kindred, who should pay obedience to any such interdict: And he farther obliged all his subjects to swear to the observance of those orders [i]. These were edicts of the utmost importance, affected the lives and properties of all the subjects, and even changed, for the time, the national religion, by breaking off all communication with Rome: Yet were they enacted by the sole authority of the king, and were derived entirely from his will and pleasure. CHAP. VIII. 1165.

The spiritual powers, which, in the primitive church, were, in a great measure, dependant on the civil, had by a gradual progress reached an equality and independence; and though the limits of the two jurisdictions were difficult to ascertain or define, it was not impossible, but, by moderation on both sides, government might still have been conducted in that imperfect and irregular manner which attends all human institutions. But as the ignorance of the age encouraged the ecclesiastics daily to extend their privileges, and even to advance maxims totally incompatible with civil government [k], Henry had thought it high time to put an end to their pretensions, and formally, in a public council, to fix those powers which belonged to the magistrate, and which he was for the future determined to maintain. In this attempt he was led to re-establish customs, which, though ancient, were beginning to be abolished by a contrary practice,

[i] Hist. Quad. p. 88. 167. Hoveden, p. 496. M. Paris, p. 73.
[k] *Quis dubitet*, says Becket to the king, *sacerdotes Christi regum et principum omniumque fidelium patres et magistros censeri.* Epist. St. Thom. p. 97. 148.

CHAP. VIII.

1165.

and which were ſtill more ſtrongly oppoſed by the prevailing opinions and ſentiments of the age. Principle, therefore, ſtood on the one ſide, power on the other; and if the Engliſh had been actuated by conſcience more than by preſent intereſt, the controverſy muſt ſoon, by the general defection of Henry's ſubjects, have been decided againſt him. Becket, in order to forward this event, filled all places with exclamations againſt the violence which he had ſuffered. He compared himſelf to Chriſt, who had been condemned by a lay tribunal [l], and who was crucified anew in the preſent oppreſſions under which his church laboured: He took it for granted, as a point inconteſtable, that his cauſe was the cauſe of God [m]: He aſſumed the character of champion for the patrimony of the Divinity: He pretended to be the ſpiritual father of the king and all the people of England [n]: He even told Henry, that kings reign ſolely by the authority of the church [o]: And though he had thus torn off the veil more openly on the one ſide, than that prince had on the other, he ſeemed ſtill, from the general favour borne him by the eccleſiaſtics, to have all the advantage in the argument. The king, that he might employ the weapons of temporal power remaining in his hands, ſuſpended the payment of Peter's-pence; he made advances towards an alliance with the emperor, Frederic Barbaroſſa, who was at that time engaged in violent wars with pope Alexander; he diſcovered ſome intentions of acknowledging Paſcal III. the preſent anti-pope, who was protected by that emperor; and by theſe expedients he endeavoured to terrify the enterpriſing though prudent pontiff from proceeding to extremities againſt him.

[l] Epiſt. St. Thom, p. 63. 105. 194. [m] Ibid. p. 29, 30, 31. 226. [n] Fitz-Steph. p. 46. Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 52. 148. [o] Brady's Append. No 56. Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 94, 95. 97. 99. 197. Hoveden, p. 497.

BUT

CHAP. VIII. 1166.

But the violence of Becket, ſtill more than the nature of the controverſy, kept affairs from remaining long in ſuſpenſe between the parties. That prelate, inſtigated by revenge, and animated by the preſent glory attending his ſituation, puſhed matters to a deciſion, and iſſued a cenſure, excommunicating the king's chief miniſters by name, and comprehending in general all thoſe who favoured or obeyed the conſtitutions of Clarendon: Theſe conſtitutions he abrogated and annulled; he abſolved all men from the oaths which they had taken to obſerve them; and he ſuſpended the ſpiritual thunder over Henry himſelf, only that the prince might avoid the blow by a timely repentance [p].

The ſituation of Henry was ſo unhappy, that he could employ no expedient for ſaving his miniſters from this terrible cenſure, but by appealing to the pope himſelf, and having recourſe to a tribunal whoſe authority he had himſelf attempted to abridge in this very article of appeals, and which, he knew, was ſo deeply engaged on the ſide of his adverſary. But even this expedient was not likely to be long effectual. Becket had obtained from the pope a legantine commiſſion over England; and in virtue of that authority, which admitted of no appeal, he ſummoned the biſhops of London, Saliſbury, and others, to attend him, and ordered, under pain of excommunication, the eccleſiaſtics, ſequeſtered on his account, to be reſtored in two months to all their benefices. But John of Oxford, the king's agent with the pope, had the addreſs to procure orders for ſuſpending this ſentence; and he gave the pontiff ſuch hopes of a ſpeedy reconcilement between the king and Becket, that two legates, William of Pavia and Otho, were ſent to Nor-

[p] Fitz-Steph. p. 56. Hiſt. Quad. p. 93. M. Paris, p. 74. Beaulieu Vie de St. Thom. p. 213. Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 149. 229. Hoveden, p. 499.

CHAP. VIII. 1166. mandy, where the king then resided, and they endeavoured to find expedients for that purpose. But the pretensions of the parties were, as yet, too opposite to admit of an accommodation: The king required, that all the constitutions of Clarendon should be ratified: Becket, that, previously to any agreement, he and his adherents should be restored to their possessions: And as the legates had no power to pronounce a definitive sentence on either side, the negotiation soon after came to nothing. The cardinal of Pavia also, being much attached to Henry, took care to protract the negotiation; to mitigate the pope, by the accounts which he sent of that prince's conduct; and to procure him every possible indulgence from the see of Rome. About this time the king had also the address to obtain a dispensation for the marriage of his third son Geoffrey, with the heiress of Britanny; a concession which, considering Henry's demerits towards the church, gave great scandal both to Becket, and to his zealous patron the king of France.

1167. THE intricacies of the feudal law had, in that age, rendered the boundaries of power between the prince and his vassals, and between one prince and another, as uncertain as those between the crown and the mitre; and all wars took their origin from disputes, which, had there been any tribunal possessed of power to enforce their decrees, ought to have been decided only before a court of judicature. Henry, in prosecution of some controversies, in which he was involved with the count of Auvergne, a vassal of the dutchy of Guienne, had invaded the territories of that nobleman; who had recourse to the king of France, his superior lord, for protection, and thereby kindled a war between the two monarchs. But this war was, as usual, no less feeble in its operations, than it was frivolous in its

cause and object; and after occasioning some mutual depredations [q], and some insurrections among the barons of Poictou and Guienne, was terminated by a peace. The terms of this peace were rather disadvantageous to Henry, and prove that that prince had, by reason of his contest with the church, lost the superiority which he had hitherto maintained over the crown of France: An additional motive to him for accommodating those differences. CHAP. VIII. 1167.

THE pope and the king began at last to perceive, that, in the present situation of affairs, neither of them could expect a final and decisive victory over the other, and that they had more to fear than to hope from the duration of the controversy. Though the vigour of Henry's government had confirmed his authority in all his dominions, his throne might be shaken by a sentence of excommunication; and if England itself could, by its situation, be more easily guarded against the contagion of superstitious prejudices, his French provinces at least, whose communication was open with the neighbouring states, would be much exposed, on that account, to some great revolution or convulsion [r]. He could not, therefore, reasonably imagine that the pope, while he retained such a check upon him, would formally recognise the constitutions of Clarendon, which both put an end to papal pretensions in England, and would give an example to other states of exerting a like independency [s]. Pope Alexander, on the other hand, being still engaged in dangerous wars with the emperor Frederic, might justly apprehend, that Henry, rather that relinquish claims of such importance, would join the party of his enemy; and as the trials hitherto made of the spiritual weapons by Becket

[q] Hoveden, p. 517. M. Paris, p. 75. Diceto, p. 547. Gervase, p. 1402, 1403. Robert de Monte.
[r] Epist. St. Thom. p. 230. [s] Ibid. p. 276.

had

CHAP. VIII. 1168. had not succeeded to his expectation, and every thing had remained quiet in all the king's dominions, nothing seemed impossible to the capacity and vigilance of so great a monarch. The disposition of minds on both sides, resulting from these circumstances, produced frequent attempts towards an accommodation; but as both parties knew that the essential articles of the dispute could not then be terminated, they entertained a perpetual jealousy of each other, and were anxious not to lose the least advantage in the negotiation. The nuncios, Gratian and Vivian, having received a commission to endeavour a reconciliation, met with the king in Normandy; and after all differences seemed to be adjusted, Henry offered to sign the treaty, with a salvo to his royal dignity; which gave such umbrage to Becket, that the negotiation, in the end, became fruitless, and the excommunications were renewed against the king's ministers. Another negotiation was conducted at Montmirail, in presence of the king of France, and the French prelates; where Becket also offered to make his submissions, with a salvo to the honour of God, and the liberties of the church; which, for a like reason, was extremely offensive to the king, and rendered the treaty abor-
1169. tive. A third conference, under the same mediation, was broken off, by Becket's insisting on a like reserve in his submissions; and even in a fourth treaty, when all the terms were adjusted, and when the primate expected to be introduced to the king, and to receive the kiss of peace, which it was usual for princes to grant in those times, and which was regarded as a sure pledge of forgiveness, Henry refused him that honour; under pretence, that, during his anger, he had made a rash vow to that purpose. This formality served, among such jealous spirits, to prevent the conclusion of the treaty; and though the difficulty was attempted to be overcome by a dispensation which the pope granted to Henry from

from his vow, that prince could not be prevailed on to depart from the resolution which he had taken. CHAP. VIII.

In one of these conferences, at which the French king was present, Henry said to that monarch: "There have been many kings of England, some "of greater, some of less authority than myself: "There have also been many archbishops of Canterbury, holy and good men, and entitled to every "kind of respect: Let Becket but act towards me "with the same submission which the greatest of "his predecessors have paid to the least of mine, "and there shall be no controversy between us." Lewis was so struck with this state of the case, and with an offer which Henry made to submit his cause to the French clergy, that he could not forbear condemning the primate, and withdrawing his friendship from him during some time: But the bigotry of that prince, and their common animosity against Henry, soon produced a renewal of their former good correspondence. 1169.

ALL difficulties were at last adjusted between the parties; and the king allowed Becket to return, on conditions which may be esteemed both honourable and advantageous to that prelate. He was not required to give up any rights of the church, or resign any of those pretensions which had been the original ground of the controversy. It was agreed that all these questions should be buried in oblivion; but that Becket and his adherents should, without making farther submission, be restored to all their livings, and that even the possessors of such benefices as depended on the see of Canterbury, and had been filled during the primate's absence, should be expelled, and Becket have liberty to supply the vacancies[t]. In return for concessions which entrenched so deeply on the honour and dignity of the crown, Henry reaped only the advantage of seeing 1170. 22d July. Compromise with Becket.

[t] Fitz-Steph. p. 68, 69. Hoveden, p. 520.

his

CHAP. VIII. 1170. his miniſters abſolved from the ſentence of excommunication pronounced againſt them, and of preventing the interdict, which, if theſe hard conditions had not been complied with, was ready to be laid on all his dominions [x]. It was eaſy to ſee how much he dreaded that event, when a prince of ſo high a ſpirit could ſubmit to terms ſo diſhonourable in order to prevent it. So anxious was Henry to accommodate all differences, and to reconcile himſelf fully with Becket, that he took the moſt extraordinary ſteps to flatter his vanity, and even, on one occaſion, humiliated himſelf ſo far as to hold the ſtirrup of that haughty prelate while he mounted [y].

But the king attained not even that temporary tranquillity which he had hoped to reap from theſe expedients. During the heat of his quarrel with Becket, while he was every day expecting an interdict to be laid on his kingdom, and a ſentence of excommunication to be fulminated againſt his perſon, he had thought it prudent to have his ſon, prince Henry, aſſociated with him in the royalty, and to make him be crowned king by the hands of Roger archbiſhop of York. By this precaution he both enſured the ſucceſſion of that prince, which, conſidering the many paſt irregularities in that point, could not but be eſteemed ſomewhat precarious; and he preſerved at leaſt his family on the throne, if the ſentence of excommunication ſhould have the effect which he dreaded, and ſhould make his ſubjects renounce their allegiance to him. Though this deſign was conducted with expedition and ſecrecy, Becket, before it was carried into execution, had got intelligence of it; and being deſirous of obſtructing all Henry's meaſures, as well as anxious to prevent this affront to himſelf, who

[x] Hiſt. Quad. p. 104. Brompton, p. 1062. Gervaſe, p. 1408. Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 704, 705, 706, 707, 792, 793, 794. Benedict. Abbas, p. 70. [y] Epiſt. 45. lib. 5.

pretended

CHAP. VIII.

1170.

pretended to the sole right, as archbishop of Canterbury, to officiate in the coronation, he had inhibited all the prelates of England from assisting at this ceremony, had procured from the pope a mandate to the same purpose [z], and had incited the king of France to protest against the coronation of young Henry, unless the princess, daughter of that monarch, should at the same time receive the royal unction. There prevailed in that age an opinion, which was a-kin to its other superstitions, that the royal unction was essential to the exercise of royal power [a]: It was therefore natural both for the king of France, careful of his daughter's establishment, and for Becket, jealous of his own dignity, to demand, in the treaty with Henry, some satisfaction in this essential point. Henry, after apologising to Lewis for the omission with regard to Margaret, and excusing it on account of the secrecy and dispatch requisite for conducting that measure, promised that the ceremony should be renewed in the persons both of the prince and princess: And he assured Becket, that besides receiving the acknowledgments of Roger and the other bishops for the seeming affront put on the see of Canterbury, the primate should, as a farther satisfaction, recover his rights by officiating in this coronation. But the violent spirit of Becket, elated by the power of the church, and by the victory which he had already obtained over his sovereign, was not content with this voluntary compensation, but resolved to make the injury, which he pretended to have suffered, a handle for taking revenge on all his enemies. On his arrival in England he met the archbishop of York, and the bishops of London and Salisbury, who were on their journey to the king in Normandy: He notified to the archbishop the sentence of suspension, and to the two bishops that of ex-

[z] Hist. Quad. p. 103. Epist. St. Thom. p. 682. Gervase, p. 1412.
[a] Epist. St. Thom. p. 708.

 commu-

CHAP. VIII. 1170. Becket's return from banishment.

communication, which at his solicitation the pope had pronounced against them. Reginald de Warenne, and Gervase de Cornhill, two of the king's ministers who were employed on their duty in Kent, asked him, on hearing of this bold attempt, whether he meant to bring fire and sword into the kingdom? But the primate, heedless of the reproof, proceeded, in the most ostentatious manner, to take possession of his diocese. In Rochester, and all the towns through which he passed, he was received with the shouts and acclamations of the populace. As he approached Southwark, the clergy, the laity, men of all ranks and ages, came forth to meet him, and celebrated with hymns of joy his triumphant entrance. And though he was obliged, by order of the young prince, who resided at Woodstoke, to return to his diocese, he found that he was not mistaken when he reckoned upon the highest veneration of the public towards his person and his dignity. He proceeded, therefore, with the more courage to dart his spiritual thunders: He issued the sentence of excommunication against Robert de Broc and Nigel de Sackville, with many others, who either had assisted at the coronation of the prince, or been active in the late persecution of the exiled clergy. This violent measure, by which he in effect denounced war against the king himself, is commonly ascribed to the vindictive disposition and imperious character of Becket; but as this prelate was also a man of acknowledged abilities, we are not, in his passions alone, to look for the cause of his conduct, when he proceeded to these extremities against his enemies. His sagacity had led him to discover all Henry's intentions; and he proposed, by this bold and unexpected assault, to prevent the execution of them.

The king, from his experience of the dispositions of his people, was become sensible that his enterprise had been too bold in establishing the constitu-

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tions of Clarendon, in defining all the branches of royal power, and in endeavouring to extort from the church of England, as well as from the pope, an expreſs avowal of theſe diſputed prerogatives. Conſcious alſo of his own violence in attempting to break or ſubdue the inflexible primate, he was not diſpleaſed to undo that meaſure which had given his enemies ſuch advantage againſt him; and he was contented that the controverſy ſhould terminate in that ambiguous manner, which was the utmoſt that princes in thoſe ages could hope to attain in their diſputes with the ſee of Rome. Though he dropped, for the preſent, the proſecution of Becket, he ſtill reſerved to himſelf the right of maintaining, that the conſtitutions of Clarendon, the original ground of the quarrel, were both the ancient cuſtoms and the preſent law of the realm: And though he knew that the papal clergy aſſerted them to be impious in themſelves, as well as abrogated by the ſentence of the ſovereign pontiff, he intended, in ſpite of their clamours, ſteadily to put thoſe laws in execution [b], and to truſt to his own abilities, and to the courſe of events, for ſucceſs in that perilous enterpriſe. He hoped that Becket's experience of a ſix years' exile would, after his pride was fully gratified by his reſtoration, be ſufficient to teach him more reſerve in his oppoſition: or if any controverſy aroſe, he expected thenceforth to engage in a more favourable cauſe, and to maintain with advantage, while the primate was now in his power [c], the ancient and undoubted cuſtoms of the kingdom againſt the uſurpations of the clergy. But Becket determined not to betray the eccleſiaſtical privileges by his connivance [d], and apprehenſive leſt a prince of ſuch profound policy, if allowed to proceed in his own way, might probably in the end prevail, reſolved to take all the advantage which

[b] Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 837. 839. [c] Fitz-Steph. p. 65.
[d] Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 345.

his

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his present victory gave him, and to disconcert the cautious measures of the king, by the vehemence and rigour of his own conduct [c]. Assured of support from Rome, he was little intimidated by dangers, which his courage taught him to despise, and which, even if attended with the most fatal consequences, would serve only to gratify his ambition and thirst of glory [f].

When the suspended and excommunicated prelates arrived at Baieux, where the king then resided, and complained to him of the violent proceedings of Becket, he instantly perceived the consequences; was sensible that his whole plan of operations was overthrown; foresaw that the dangerous contest between the civil and spiritual powers, a contest which he himself had first roused, but which he had endeavoured, by all his late negotiations and concessions, to appease, must come to an immediate and decisive issue; and he was thence thrown into the most violent commotion. The archbishop of York remarked to him, that so long as Becket lived, he could never expect to enjoy peace or tranquillity: The king himself, being vehemently agitated, burst forth into an exclamation against his servants, whose want of zeal, he said, had so long left him exposed to the enterprises of that ungrateful and imperious prelate [g]. Four gentlemen of his household, Reginald Fitz-Urse, William de Traci, Hugh de Moreville, and Richard Brito, taking these passionate expressions to be a hint for Becket's death, immediately communicated their thoughts to each other; and swearing to avenge their prince's quarrel, secretly withdrew from court [h]. Some menacing expressions which they had dropped, gave a suspicion of their design; and the king dispatched a messenger after them, charging them to attempt

[c] Fitz-Steph. p. 74. [f] Epist. St. Thom. p. 818. 848.
[g] Gervase, p. 1414. Parker, p. 207. [h] M. Paris, p. 86. Brompton, p. 1065. Benedict. Abbas, p. 10.

nothing

nothing againſt the perſon of the primate[i]: But these orders arrived too late to prevent their fatal purpoſe. The four aſſaſſins, though they took different roads to England, arrived nearly about the ſame time at Saltwoode near Canterbury; and being there joined by ſome aſſiſtants, they proceeded in great haſte to the archiepiſcopal palace. They found the primate, who truſted entirely to the ſacredneſs of his character, very ſlenderly attended; and though they threw out many menaces and reproaches againſt him, he was ſo incapable of fear, that, without uſing any precautions againſt their violence, he immediately went to St. Benedict's church to hear veſpers. They followed him thither, attacked him before the altar, and having cloven his head with many blows, retired without meeting any oppoſition. This was the tragical end of Thomas a Becket, a prelate of the moſt lofty, intrepid, and inflexible ſpirit, who was able to cover to the world, and probably to himſelf, the enterpriſes of pride and ambition, under the diſguiſe of ſanctity, and of zeal for the intereſts of religion: An extraordinary perſonage, ſurely, had he been allowed to remain in his firſt ſtation, and had directed the vehemence of his character to the ſupport of law and juſtice; inſtead of being engaged, by the prejudices of the times, to ſacrifice all private duties and public connexions to ties which he imagined or repreſented as ſuperior to every civil and political conſideration. But no man who enters into the genius of that age can reaſonably doubt of this prelate's ſincerity. The ſpirit of ſuperſtition was ſo prevalent, that it infallibly caught every careleſs reaſoner, much more every one whoſe intereſt, and honour, and ambition, were engaged to ſupport it. All the wretched literature of the times was inliſted on that ſide: Some faint glimmerings of common ſenſe might ſometimes pierce through

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i Hiſt. Quad. p. 144. Trivet, p. 55.

CHAP. VIII. 1170. the thick cloud of ignorance, or, what was worse, the illusions of perverted science, which had blotted out the sun, and enveloped the face of nature: But those who preserved themselves untainted by the general contagion, proceeded on no principles which they could pretend to justify: They were more indebted to their total want of instruction, than to their knowledge, if they still retained some share of understanding: Folly was possessed of all the schools as well as all the churches; and her votaries assumed the garb of philosophers, together with the ensigns of spiritual dignities. Throughout that large collection of letters which bears the name of St. Thomas, we find, in all the retainers of that aspiring prelate, no less than in himself, a most entire and absolute conviction of the reason and piety of their own party, and a disdain of their antagonists: Nor is there less cant and grimace in their style, when they address each other, than when they compose manifestos for the perusal of the public. The spirit of revenge, violence, and ambition, which accompanied their conduct, instead of forming a presumption of hypocrisy, are the surest pledges of their sincere attachment to a cause, which so much flattered these domineering passions.

Grief

HENRY, on the first report of Becket's violent measures, had purposed to have him arrested, and had already taken some steps towards the execution of that design: But the intelligence of his murder threw the prince into great consternation; and he was immediately sensible of the dangerous consequences which he had reason to apprehend from so unexpected an event. An archbishop of reputed sanctity assassinated before the altar, in the exercise of his functions, and on account of his zeal in maintaining ecclesiastical privileges, must attain the highest honours of martyrdom; while his murderer would be ranked among the most bloody tyrants that ever were exposed to the hatred and detestation of mankind. Interdicts and excommunications,

weapons in themselves so terrible, would, he fore- CHAP. VIII. 1170.
saw, be armed with double force, when employed in a cause so much calculated to work on the human passions, and so peculiarly adapted to the eloquence of popular preachers and declaimers. In vain would he plead his own innocence, and even his total ignorance of the fact: He was sufficiently guilty, if the church thought proper to esteem him such: And his concurrence in Becket's martyrdom, becoming a religious opinion, would be received with all the implicit credit which belonged to the most established articles of faith. These considerations gave the king the most unaffected concern; and as it was extremely his interest to clear himself from all suspicion, he took no care to conceal the depth of his affliction [k]. He shut himself up from the light of day, and from all commerce with his servants: He even refused, during three days, all food and sustenance [l]: The courtiers, apprehending dangerous effects from his despair, were at last obliged to break in upon his solitude; and they employed every topic of consolation, induced him to accept of nourishment, and occupied his leisure in taking precautions against the consequences which he so justly apprehended from the murder of the primate.

1171. and submission of the king.

THE point of chief importance to Henry was to convince the pope of his innocence; or rather, to persuade him that he would reap greater advantages from the submissions of England, than from proceeding to extremities against that kingdom. The archbishop of Roüen, the bishops of Worcester and Evreux, with five persons of inferior quality, were immediately dispatched to Rome [m], and orders were given them to perform their journey with the utmost expedition. Though the name and authority

[k] Ypod. Neust. p. 447. M. Paris, p. 87. Diceto, p. 556. Gervase, p. 1419. [l] Hist. Quad. p. 143. [m] Hoveden, p. 526. M. Paris, p. 87.

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of the court of Rome were so terrible in the remote countries of Europe which were sunk in profound ignorance, and were entirely unacquainted with its character and conduct; the pope was so little revered at home, that his inveterate enemies surrounded the gates of Rome itself, and even controlled his government in that city; and the ambassadors who, from a distant extremity of Europe, carried to him the humble or rather abject submissions of the greatest potentate of the age, found the utmost difficulty to make their way to him, and to throw themselves at his feet. It was at length agreed that Richard Barre, one of their number, should leave the rest behind, and run all the hazards of the passage [n], in order to prevent the fatal consequences which might ensue from any delay in giving satisfaction to his holiness. He found, on his arrival, that Alexander was already wrought up to the greatest rage against the king, that Becket's partisans were daily stimulating him to revenge, that the king of France had exhorted him to fulminate the most dreadful sentence against England, and that the very mention of Henry's name before the sacred college was received with every expression of horror and execration. The Thursday before Easter was now approaching, when it is customary for the pope to denounce annual curses against all his enemies; and it was expected that Henry should, with all the preparations peculiar to the discharge of that sacred artillery, be solemnly comprehended in the number. But Barre found means to appease the pontiff, and to deter him from a measure which, if it failed of success, could not afterwards be easily recalled: The anathemas were only levelled in general against all the actors, accomplices, and abettors of Becket's murder. The abbot of Valasse, and the archdeacons of Salisbury and Lisieux, with others of

[n] Hoveden, p. 526. Epist. St. Thom. p. 863.

Henry's

Henry's ministers, who soon after arrived, besides asserting their prince's innocence, made oath before the whole consistory, that he would stand to the pope's judgment in the affair, and make every submission that should be required of him. The terrible blow was thus artfully eluded; the cardinals Albert and Theodin were appointed legates to examine the cause, and were ordered to proceed to Normandy for that purpose; and though Henry's foreign dominions were already laid under an interdict by the archbishop of Sens, Becket's great partisan, and the pope's legate in France, the general expectation, that the monarch would easily exculpate himself from any concurrence in the guilt, kept every one in suspense, and prevented all the bad consequences which might be dreaded from that sentence.

THE clergy, meanwhile, though their rage was happily diverted from falling on the king, were not idle in magnifying the sanctity of Becket; in extolling the merits of his martyrdom; and in exalting him above all that devoted tribe who in several ages had, by their blood, cemented the fabric of the temple. Other saints had only borne testimony by their sufferings to the general doctrines of christianity; but Becket had sacrificed his life to the power and privileges of the clergy; and this peculiar merit challenged, and not in vain, a suitable acknowledgment to his memory. Endless were the panegyrics on his virtues; and the miracles wrought by his reliques were more numerous, more nonsensical, and more impudently attested, than those which ever filled the legend of any confessor or martyr. Two years after his death he was canonized by pope Alexander; a solemn jubilee was established for celebrating his merits; his body was removed to a magnificent shrine, enriched with presents from all parts of Christendom; pilgrimages were performed to obtain his intercession with heaven; and it was

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computed, that in one year above a hundred thousand pilgrims arrived in Canterbury, and paid their devotions at his tomb. It is indeed a mortifying reflection to those who are actuated by the love of fame, so justly denominated the last infirmity of noble minds, that the wisest legislator, and most exalted genius that ever reformed or enlightened the world, can never expect such tributes of praise as are lavished on the memory of pretended saints, whose whole conduct was probably to the last degree odious or contemptible, and whose industry was entirely directed to the pursuit of objects pernicious to mankind. It is only a conqueror, a personage no less entitled to our hatred, who can pretend to the attainment of equal renown and glory.

It may not be amiss to remark, before we conclude the subject of Thomas a Becket, that the king, during his controversy with that prelate, was on every occasion more anxious than usual to express his zeal for religion, and to avoid all appearance of a profane negligence on that head. He gave his consent to the imposing of a tax on all his dominions for the delivery of the Holy Land, now threatened by the famous Saladine: This tax amounted to two pence a pound for one year, and a penny a pound for the four subsequent [o]. Almost all the princes of Europe laid a like imposition on their subjects, which received the name of Saladine's tax. During this period, there came over from Germany about thirty heretics of both sexes, under the direction of one Gerard; simple ignorant people, who could give no account of their faith, but declared themselves ready to suffer for the tenets of their master. They made only one convert in England, a woman as ignorant as themselves; yet they gave such umbrage to the clergy, that they were delivered over to the secular arm, and were

[o] Chron. Gervase, p. 1399. M. Paris, p. 74.

punished

punished by being burned on the forehead, and then whipped through the streets. They seemed to exult in their sufferings, and as they went along, sung the beatitude, *Blessed are ye, when men hate you and persecute you*[p]. After they were whipped, they were thrust out almost naked in the midst of winter, and perished through cold and hunger; no one daring or being willing to give them the least relief. We are ignorant of the particular tenets of these people: For it would be imprudent to rely on the representations left of them by the clergy, who affirm that they denied the efficacy of the sacraments, and the unity of the church. It is probable that their departure from the standard of orthodoxy was still more subtle and minute. They seem to have been the first that ever suffered for heresy in England. CHAP. VIII. 1171.

As soon as Henry found that he was in no immediate danger from the thunders of the Vatican, he undertook an expedition against Ireland; a design which he had long projected, and by which he hoped to recover his credit, somewhat impaired by his late transactions with the hierarchy.

[p] Neubr. p. 391. M. Paris, p. 74. Heming. p. 494.

CHAP. IX.

HENRY II.

State of Ireland——Conquest of that island——The king's accommodation with the court of Rome——Revolt of young Henry and his brothers——Wars and insurrections——War with Scotland——Penance of Henry for Becket's murder——William king of Scotland defeated and taken prisoner——The king's accommodation with his sons——The king's equitable administration——Crusades——Revolt of prince Richard——Death and character of Henry——Miscellaneous transactions of his reign.

CHAP. IX.

1172.
State of Ireland.

AS Britain was first peopled from Gaul, so was Ireland probably from Britain; and the inhabitants of all these countries seem to have been so many tribes of the Celtæ, who derive their origin from an antiquity that lies far beyond the records of any history or tradition. The Irish from the beginning of time had been buried in the most profound barbarism and ignorance; and as they were never conquered, or even invaded by the Romans, from whom all the western world derived its civility, they continued still in the most rude state of society, and were distinguished by those vices alone to which human nature, not tamed by education, or restrained by laws, is for ever subject. The small principalites into which they were divided, exercised perpetual rapine and violence against each other; the uncertain succession of their princes was a continual source of domestic convulsions; the

ufual title of each petty fovereign was the murderer of his predeceffor; courage and force, though exercifed in the commiffion of crimes, were more honoured than any pacific virtues; and the moft fimple arts of life, even tillage and agriculture, were almoft wholly unknown among them. They had felt the invafions of the Danes and the other northern tribes; but thefe inroads, which had fpread barbarifm in other parts of Europe, tended rather to improve the Irifh; and the only towns which were to be found in the ifland, had been planted along the coaft by the freebooters of Norway and Denmark. The other inhabitants exercifed pafturage in the open country; fought protection from any danger in their forefts and moraffes; and being divided by the fierceft animofities againft each other, were ftill more intent on the means of mutual injury, than on the expedients for common or even for private intereft.

Besides many fmall tribes, there were in the age of Henry II. five principal fovereignties in the ifland, Munfter, Leinfter, Meath, Ulfter, and Connaught; and as it had been ufual for the one or the other of thefe to take the lead in their wars, there was commonly fome prince, who feemed, for the time, to act as monarch of Ireland. Roderic O'Connor, king of Connaught, was then advanced to this dignity [q]; but his government, ill obeyed even within his own territory, could not unite the people in any meafures either for the eftablifhment of order, or for defence againft foreigners. The ambition of Henry had, very early in his reign, been moved by the profpect of thefe advantages, to attempt the fubjecting of Ireland; and a pretence was only wanting to invade a people who, being always confined to their own ifland, had never given any reafon of complaint to any of their neighbours.

[q] Hoveden, p. 527.

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bours. For this purpose, he had recourse to Rome, which assumed a right to dispose of kingdoms and empires; and not foreseeing the dangerous disputes, which he was one day to maintain with that see, he helped, for present, or rather for an imaginary convenience, to give sanction to claims which were now become dangerous to all sovereigns. Adrian III. who then filled the papal chair, was by birth an Englishman; and being on that account the more disposed to oblige Henry, he was easily persuaded to act as master of the world, and to make, without any hazard or expence, the acquisition of a great island to his spiritual jurisdiction. The Irish had, by precedent missions from the Britons, been imperfectly converted to christianity; and, what the pope regarded as the surest mark of their imperfect conversion, they followed the doctrines of their first teachers, and had never acknowledged any subjection to the see of Rome. Adrian, therefore, in the year 1156, issued a bull in favour of Henry; in which, after premising that this prince had ever shewn an anxious care to enlarge the church of God on earth, and to increase the number of his saints and elect in heaven; he represents his design of subduing Ireland as derived from the same pious motives: He considers his care of previously applying for the apostolic sanction as a sure earnest of success and victory; and having established it as a point incontestible, that all christian kingdoms belong to the patrimony of St. Peter, he acknowledges it to be his own duty to sow among them the seeds of the gospel, which might in the last day fructify to their eternal salvation: He exhorts the king to invade Ireland, in order to extirpate the vice and wickedness of the natives, and oblige them to pay yearly, from every house, a penny to the see of Rome: He gives him entire right and authority over the island, commands all the inhabitants to obey him as their sovereign, and invests

vests with full power all such godly instruments as he should think proper to employ in an enterprise thus calculated for the glory of God and the salvation of the souls of men[r]. Henry, though armed with this authority, did not immediately put his design in execution; but being detained by more interesting business on the continent, waited for a favourable opportunity of invading Ireland.

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DERMOT Macmorrogh, king of Leinster, had, by his licentious tyranny, rendered himself odious to his subjects, who seized with alacrity the first occasion that offered of throwing off the yoke, which was become grievous and oppressive to them. This prince had formed a design on Dovergilda, wife of Ororic prince of Breffny; and taking advantage of her husband's absence, who, being obliged to visit a distant part of his territory, had left his wife secure, as he thought, in an island surrounded by a bog; he suddenly invaded the place and carried off the princess[s]. This exploit, though usual among the Irish, and rather deemed a proof of gallantry and spirit[t], provoked the resentment of the husband; who, having collected forces, and being strengthened by the alliance of Roderic king of Connaught, invaded the dominions of Dermot, and expelled him his kingdom. The exiled prince had recourse to Henry, who was at this time in Guienne, craved his assistance in restoring him to his sovereignty, and offered, on that event, to hold his kingdom in vassalage under the crown of England. Henry, whose views were already turned towards making acquisitions in Ireland, readily accepted the offer; but being at that time embarrassed by the rebellions of his French subjects, as well as by his disputes with the see of Rome, he declined for the present embarking in the enterprise, and gave

[r] M. Paris, p. 67. Girald. Cambr. Spelm. Concil. vol. ii. p. 51. Rymer, vol. i. p. 15. [s] Girald. Cambr. p. 760.
[t] Spencer, vol. vi.

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Dermot no farther aſſiſtance than letters patent, by which he empowered all his ſubjects to aid the Iriſh prince in the recovery of his dominions [u]. Dermot, ſupported by this authority, came to Briſtol; and after endeavouring, though for ſome time in vain, to engage adventurers in the enterpriſe, he at laſt formed a treaty with Richard, ſurnamed Strongbow, earl of Strigul. This nobleman, who was of the illuſtrious houſe of Clare, had impaired his fortune by expenſive pleaſures; and being ready for any deſperate undertaking, he promiſed aſſiſtance to Dermot, on condition that he ſhould eſpouſe Eva daughter of that prince, and be declared heir to all his dominions [w]. While Richard was aſſembling his ſuccours, Dermot went into Wales; and meeting with Robert Fitz-Stephens, conſtable of Abertivi, and Maurice Fitz-Gerald, he alſo engaged them in his ſervice, and obtained their promiſe of invading Ireland. Being now aſſured of ſuccour, he returned privately to his own ſtate; and lurking in the monaſtery of Fernez, which he had founded (for this ruffian was alſo a founder of monaſteries), he prepared every thing for the reception of his Engliſh allies [x].

Conqueſt of that Iſland.

THE troops of Fitz-Stephens were firſt ready. That gentleman landed in Ireland with thirty knights, ſixty eſquires, and three hundred archers; but this ſmall body, being brave men, not unacquainted with diſcipline, and completely armed, a thing almoſt unknown in Ireland, ſtruck a great terror into the barbarous inhabitants, and ſeemed to menace them with ſome ſignal revolution. The conjunction of Maurice de Pendergaſt, who, about the ſame time, brought over ten knights and ſixty archers, enabled Fitz-Stephens to attempt the ſiege of Wexford, a town inhabited by the Danes; and after gaining an advantage, he made himſelf maſter

[u] Girald. Camb. p. 760. [w] Ibid. p. 761.
[x] Ibid. p. 761.

of

of the place[y]. Soon after, Fitz-Gerald arrived with ten knights, thirty esquires, and a hundred archers[z]; and being joined by the former adventurers, composed a force which nothing in Ireland was able to withstand. Roderic, the chief monarch of the island, was foiled in different actions; the prince of Offory was obliged to submit, and give hostages for his peaceable behaviour; and Dermot, not content with being restored to his kingdom of Leinster, projected the dethroning of Roderic, and aspired to the sole dominion over the Irish. CHAP. IX. 1172.

IN prosecution of these views, he sent over a messenger to the earl of Strigul, challenging the performance of his promise, and displaying the mighty advantages which might now be reaped by a reinforcement of warlike troops from England. Richard, not satisfied with the general allowance given by Henry to all his subjects, went to that prince, then in Normandy; and having obtained a cold or ambiguous permission, prepared himself for the execution of his designs. He first sent over Raymond, one of his retinue, with ten knights and seventy archers, who, landing near Waterford, defeated a body of three thousand Irish that had ventured to attack him[a]; and as Richard himself, who brought over two hundred horse, and a body of archers, joined, a few days after, the victorious English, they made themselves masters of Waterford, and proceeded to Dublin, which was taken by assault. Roderic, in revenge, cut off the head of Dermot's natural son, who had been left as a hostage in his hands; and Richard, marrying Eva, became soon after, by the death of Dermot, master of the kingdom of Leinster, and prepared to extend his authority over all Ireland. Roderic and the other Irish princes were alarmed at the danger; and combining together, besieged Dublin

[y] Girald. Cambr. p. 761, 762. [z] Ibid. p. 766.
[a] Ibid. p. 767.

with

CHAP. IX. 1172. with an army of thirty thousand men: But earl Richard, making a sudden sally at the head of ninety knights, with their followers, put this numerous army to rout, chased them off the field, and pursued them with great slaughter. None in Ireland now dared to oppose themselves to the English [b].

Henry, jealous of the progress made by his own subjects, sent orders to recal all the English, and he made preparations to attack Ireland in person [c]: But Richard, and the other adventurers, found means to appease him, by making him the most humble submissions, and offering to hold all their acquisitions in vassalage to his crown [d]. That monarch landed in Ireland at the head of five hundred knights, besides other soldiers: He found the Irish so dispirited by their late misfortunes, that, in a progress which he made through the island, he had no other occupation than to receive the homage of his new subjects. He left most of the Irish chieftains or princes in possession of their ancient territories; bestowed some lands on the English adventurers; gave earl Richard the commission of seneschal of Ireland; and after a stay of a few months, returned in triumph to England. By these trivial exploits, scarcely worth relating, except for the importance of the consequences, was Ireland subdued, and annexed to the English crown.

The low state of commerce and industry during those ages made it impracticable for princes to support regular armies, which might retain a conquered country in subjection; and the extreme barbarism and poverty of Ireland could still less afford means of bearing the expence. The only expedient, by which a durable conquest could then be made or maintained, was by pouring in a multitude of new inhabitants, dividing among them the lands of the vanquished, establishing them in all offices of trust

[b] Girald. Cambr. p. 773. [c] Ibid. p. 770.
[d] Ibid. p. 775.

and

and authority, and thereby transforming the ancient inhabitants into a new people. By this policy, the northern invaders of old, and of late the duke of Normandy, had been able to fix their dominion, and to erect kingdoms, which remained ſtable on their foundations, and were tranſmitted to the poſterity of the firſt conquerors. But the ſtate of Ireland rendered that iſland ſo little inviting to the Engliſh, that only a few of deſperate fortunes could be perſuaded, from time to time, to tranſport themſelves thither[e]; and inſtead of reclaiming the natives from their uncultivated manners, they were gradually aſſimilated to the ancient inhabitants, and degenerated from the cuſtoms of their own nation. It was alſo found requiſite to beſtow great military and arbitrary powers on the leaders, who commanded a handful of men amidſt ſuch hoſtile multitudes; and law and equity, in a little time, became as much unknown in the Engliſh ſettlements, as they had ever been among the Iriſh tribes. Palatinates were erected in favour of the new adventurers; independent authority conferred; the natives, never fully ſubdued, ſtill retained their animoſity againſt the conquerors; their hatred was retaliated by like injuries; and from theſe cauſes, the Iriſh, during the courſe of four centuries, remained ſtill ſavage and untractable: It was not till the latter end of Elizabeth's reign, that the iſland was fully ſubdued; nor till that of her ſucceſſor, that it gave hopes of becoming a uſeful conqueſt to the Engliſh nation.

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BESIDES that the eaſy and peaceable ſubmiſſion of the Iriſh left Henry no farther occupation in that iſland, he was recalled from it by another incident, which was of the laſt importance to his intereſt and ſafety. The two legates Albert and Theodin, to whom was committed the trial of his conduct in the murder of archbiſhop Becket, were arrived in Normandy;

[e] Brompton, p. 1069. Neubrig. p 403.

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mandy; and being impatient of delay, ſent him frequent letters, full of menaces, if he protracted any longer making his appearance before them [f]. He haſtened therefore to Normandy, and had a conference with them at Savigny, where their demands were ſo exorbitant, that he broke off the negotiation, threatened to return to Ireland, and bade them do their worſt againſt him. They perceived that the ſeaſon was now paſt for taking advantage of that tragical incident; which, had it been hotly purſued by interdicts and excommunications, was capable of throwing the whole kingdom into combuſtion. But the time which Henry had happily gained had contributed to appeaſe the minds of men: The event could not now have the ſame influence as when it was recent; and as the clergy every day looked for an accommodation with the king, they had not oppoſed the pretenſions of his partiſans, who had been very induſtrious in repreſenting to the people his entire innocence in the murder of the primate, and his ignorance of the deſigns formed by the aſſaſſins. The legates, therefore, found themſelves obliged to lower their terms; and Henry was ſo fortunate as to conclude an accommodation with them. He declared upon oath, before the reliques of the ſaints, that, ſo far from commanding or deſiring the death of the archbiſhop, he was extremely grieved when he received intelligence of it: But as the paſſion, which he had expreſſed on account of that prelate's conduct, had probably been the occaſion of his murder, he ſtipulated the following conditions, as an atonement for the offence. He promiſed, that he ſhould pardon all ſuch as had been baniſhed for adhering to Becket, and ſhould reſtore them to their livings; that the ſee of Canterbury ſhould be reinſtated in all its ancient poſſeſſions; that he ſhould pay the templars a

The king's accommodation with the court of Rome.

f Girald. Cambr. p. 778.

ſum

ſum of money ſufficient for the ſubſiſtence of two hundred knights during a year in the Holy Land; that he ſhould himſelf take the croſs at the Chriſtmas following, and, if the pope required it, ſerve three years againſt the infidels either in Spain or Paleſtine; that he ſhould not inſiſt on the obſervance of ſuch cuſtoms, derogatory to eccleſiaſtical privileges, as had been introduced in his own time; and that he ſhould not obſtruct appeals to the pope in eccleſiaſtical cauſes, but ſhould content himſelf with exacting ſufficient ſecurity from ſuch clergymen as left his dominions to proſecute an appeal, that they ſhould attempt nothing againſt the rights of his crown [g]. Upon ſigning theſe conceſſions, Henry received abſolution from the legates, and was confirmed in the grant of Ireland made by pope Adrian [h]; and nothing proves more ſtrongly the great abilities of this monarch, than his extricating himſelf on ſuch eaſy terms, from ſo difficult a ſituation. He had always inſiſted, that the laws eſtabliſhed at Clarendon contained not any new claims, but the ancient cuſtoms of the kingdom; and he was ſtill at liberty, notwithſtanding the articles of this agreement, to maintain his pretenſions. Appeals to the pope were indeed permitted by that treaty; but as the king was alſo permitted to exact reaſonable ſecurities from the parties, and might ſtretch his demands on this head as far as he pleaſed, he had it virtually in his power to prevent the pope from reaping any advantage by this ſeeming conceſſion. And on the whole, the conſtitutions of Clarendon remained ſtill the law of the realm: though the pope and his legates ſeem ſo little to have conceived the king's power to lie under any legal limitations, that they were ſatisfied with his departing, by treaty, from one of the moſt moment-

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[g] M. Paris, p. 88. Benedict. Abb. p. 34. Hoveden, p. 529. Diceto, p. 560. Chron. Gerv. p. 1422.

[h] Brompton, p. 1071. Liber Nig. Scac. p. 47.

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ous articles of these constitutions, without requiring any repeal by the states of the kingdom.

HENRY, freed from this dangerous controversy with the ecclesiastics, and with the see of Rome, seemed now to have reached the pinnacle of human grandeur and felicity, and to be equally happy in his domestic situation and in his political government. A numerous progeny of sons and daughters gave both lustre and authority to his crown, prevented the dangers of a disputed succession, and repressed all pretensions of the ambitious barons. The king's precaution also, in establishing the several branches of his family, seemed well calculated to prevent all jealousy among the brothers, and to perpetuate the greatness of his family. He had appointed Henry, his eldest son, to be his successor in the kingdom of England, the dutchy of Normandy, and the counties of Anjou, Maine, and Touraine; territories which lay contiguous, and which, by that means, might easily lend to each other mutual assistance both against intestine commotions and foreign invasions. Richard, his second son, was invested in the dutchy of Guienne and county of Poictou; Geoffrey, his third son, inherited, in right of his wife, the dutchy of Britanny; and the new conquest of Ireland was destined for the appanage of John, his fourth son. He had also negotiated, in favour of this last prince, a marriage with Adelais, the only daughter of Humbert count of Savoy and Maurienne; and was to receive as her dowry considerable demesnes in Piedmont, Savoy, Bresse, and Dauphiny[i]. But this exaltation of his family excited the jealousy of all his neighbours, who made those very sons, whose fortunes he had so anxiously established, the means of embittering his future life, and disturbing his government.

[i] Ypod. Neust. p. 448. Bened. Abb. p. 38. Hoveden, p. 532. Diceto, p. 562. Brompton, p. 1081. Rymer, vol. i. p. 33.

YOUNG

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YOUNG Henry, who was rising to man's estate, began to display his character, and aspire to independence: Brave, ambitious, liberal, munificent, affable; he discovered qualities which gave great lustre to youth; prognosticate a shining fortune; but, unless tempered in mature age with discretion, are the forerunner of the greatest calamities [k]. It is said, that at the time when this prince received the royal unction, his father, in order to give greater dignity to the ceremony, officiated at table as one of the retinue; and observed to his son, that never king was more royally served. *It is nothing extraordinary,* said young Henry to one of his courtiers, *if the son of a count should serve the son of a king.* This saying, which might pass only for an innocent pleasantry, or even for an oblique compliment to his father, was however regarded as a symptom of his aspiring temper; and his conduct soon after justified the conjecture.

HENRY, agreeably to the promise which he had given both to the pope and French king, permitted his son to be crowned anew by the hands of the archbishop of Roüen, and associated the princess Margaret, spouse to young Henry, in the ceremony [l]. He afterwards allowed him to pay a visit to his father-in-law at Paris, who took the opportunity of instilling into the young prince those ambitious sentiments to which he was naturally but too much inclined [m]. Though it had been the constant practice of France, ever since the accession of the Capetian line, to crown the son during the lifetime of the father, without conferring on him any present participation of royalty; Lewis persuaded his son-in-law, that, by this ceremony, which in those

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Revolt of young Henry and his brothers.

[k] Chron. Gerv. p. 1463. [l] Hoveden, p. 529. Diceto, p. 560. Brompton, p. 1080. Chron. Gervas. p. 1421. Trivet, p. 58. It appears from Madox's History of the Exchequer, that silk garments were then known in England, and that the coronation robes of the young king and queen cost eighty-seven pounds ten shillings and four pence, money of that age. [m] Girald. Cambr. p. 782.

CHAP. IX. 1173. ages was deemed so important, he had acquired a title to sovereignty, and that the king could not, without injustice, exclude him from immediate possession of the whole, or at least a part of his dominions. In consequence of these extravagant ideas, young Henry, on his return, desired the king to resign to him either the crown of England, or the dutchy of Normandy; discovered great discontent on the refusal; spake in the most undutiful terms of his father; and soon after, in concert with Lewis, made his escape to Paris, where he was protected and supported by that monarch.

While Henry was alarmed at this incident, and had the prospect of dangerous intrigues, or even of a war, which, whether successful or not, must be extremely calamitous and disagreeable to him, he received intelligence of new misfortunes, which must have affected him in the most sensible manner. Queen Eleanor, who had disgusted her first husband by her gallantries, was no less offensive to her second by her jealousy; and after this manner carried to extremity, in the different periods of her life, every circumstance of female weakness. She communicated her discontents against Henry to her two younger sons, Geoffrey and Richard; persuaded them that they were also entitled to present possession of the territories assigned to them; engaged them to fly secretly to the court of France; and was meditating, herself, an escape to the same court, and had even put on man's apparel for that purpose; when she was seized by orders from her husband, and thrown into confinement. Thus Europe saw with astonishment the best and most indulgent of parents at war with his whole family; three boys, scarcely arrived at the age of puberty, require a great monarch, in the full vigour of his age and height of his reputation, to dethrone himself in their favour; and several princes not ashamed to support them in these unnatural and absurd pretensions.

Henry,

1173.

Henry, reduced to this perilous and disagreeable situation, had recourse to the court of Rome: Though sensible of the danger attending the interposition of ecclesiastical authority in temporal disputes, he applied to the pope, as his superior lord, to excommunicate his enemies, and by these censures to reduce to obedience his undutiful children, whom he found such reluctance to punish by the sword of the magistrate [n]. Alexander, well pleased to exert his power in so justifiable a cause, issued the bulls required of him: But it was soon found, that these spiritual weapons had not the same force as when employed in a spiritual controversy; and that the clergy were very negligent in supporting a sentence, which was nowise calculated to promote the immediate interests of their order. The king, after taking in vain this humiliating step, was obliged to have recourse to arms, and to enlist such auxiliaries, as are the usual resource of tyrants, and have seldom been employed by so wise and just a monarch.

The loose government which prevailed in all the states of Europe, the many private wars carried on among the neighbouring nobles, and the impossibility of enforcing any general execution of the laws, had encouraged a tribe of banditti to disturb every where the public peace, to infest the highways, to pillage the open country, and to brave all the efforts of the civil magistrate, and even the excommunications of the church, which were fulminated against them [o]. Troops of them were sometimes enlisted in the service of one prince or baron, sometimes in that of another: They often acted in an independent manner, under leaders of their own:

[n] Epist. Petri Bles. epist. 136. in Biblioth. Patr. tom. xxiv. p. 1048. His words are, *Vestræ jurisdictionis est regnum Angliæ, et quantum ad feudatorii juris obligationem, vobis duntaxat obnoxius teneor.* The same strange paper is in Rymer, vol. i. p. 35. and Trivet, vol. i. p. 62.

[o] Neubrig, p. 413.

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The peaceable and industrious inhabitants, reduced to poverty by their ravages, were frequently obliged, for subsistence, to betake themselves to a like disorderly course of life: And a continual intestine war, pernicious to industry, as well as to the execution of justice, was thus carried on in the bowels of every kingdom [p]. Those desperate ruffians received the name sometimes of Brabançons, sometimes of Routiers or Cottereaux; but for what reason is not agreed by historians: And they formed a kind of society or government among themselves, which set at defiance the rest of mankind. The greatest monarchs were not ashamed, on occasion, to have recourse to their assistance; and as their habits of war and depredation had given them experience, hardiness, and courage, they generally composed the most formidable part of those armies, which decided the political quarrels of princes. Several of them were enlisted among the forces levied by Henry's enemies [q]; but the great treasures amassed by that prince enabled him to engage more numerous troops of them in his service; and the situation of his affairs rendered even such banditti the only forces on whose fidelity he could repose any confidence. His licentious barons, disgusted with a vigilant government, were more desirous of being ruled by young princes, ignorant of public affairs, remiss in their conduct, and profuse in their grants [r]; and as the king had ensured to his sons the succession to every particular province of his dominions, the nobles dreaded no danger in adhering to those who, they knew, must some time become their sovereigns. Prompted by these motives, many of the Norman nobility had deserted to his son Henry; the Breton and Gascon barons seemed equally disposed to embrace the quarrel of Geoffrey and Richard. Disaffection had creeped in among

[p] Chron. Gerv. p. 1461. [q] Petr. Blef. epist. 47.
[r] Diceto, p. 570.

the

the English; and the earls of Leicester and Chester in particular had openly declared against the king. Twenty thousand Brabançons, therefore, joined to some troops which he brought over from Ireland, and a few barons of approved fidelity, formed the sole force with which he intended to resist his enemies. CHAP. IX. 1173.

Lewis, in order to bind the confederates in a closer union, summoned at Paris an assembly of the chief vassals of the crown, received their approbation of his measures, and engaged them by oath to adhere to the cause of young Henry. This prince, in return, bound himself by a like tie never to desert his French allies; and having made a new great seal, he lavishly distributed among them many considerable parts of those territories which he purposed to conquer from his father. The counts of Flanders, Boulogne, Blois, and Eu, partly moved by the general jealousy arising from Henry's power and ambition, partly allured by the prospect of reaping advantage from the inconsiderate temper and the necessities of the young prince, declared openly in favour of the latter. William, king of Scotland, had also entered into this great confederacy; and a plan was concerted for a general invasion on different parts of the king's extensive and factious dominions.

Hostilities were first commenced by the counts of Flanders and Boulogne on the frontiers of Normandy. Those princes laid siege to Aumale, which was delivered into their hands by the treachery of the count of that name: This nobleman surrendered himself prisoner; and on pretence of thereby paying his ransom, opened the gates of all his other fortresses. The two counts next besieged and made themselves masters of Drincourt: But the count of Boulogne was here mortally wounded in the assault; and this incident put some stop to the progress of the Flemish arms.

CHAP. IX. 1173 Wars and insurrections.

In another quarter, the king of France, being strongly assisted by his vassals, assembled a great army of seven thousand knights and their followers on horseback, and a proportionable number of infantry: Carrying young Henry along with him, he laid siege to Verneüil, which was vigorously defended by Hugh de Lacy and Hugh de Beauchamp, the governors. After he had lain a month before the place, the garrison, being straitened for provisions, were obliged to capitulate; and they engaged, if not relieved within three days, to surrender the town, and to retire into the citadel. On the last of these days, Henry appeared with his army upon the heights above Verneüil. Lewis, dreading an attack, sent the archbishop of Sens and the count of Blois to the English camp, and desired that next day should be appointed for a conference, in order to establish a general peace, and terminate the difference between Henry and his sons. The king, who passionately desired this accommodation, and suspected no fraud, gave his consent; but Lewis, that morning, obliging the garrison to surrender, according to the capitulation, set fire to the place, and began to retire with his army. Henry provoked at this artifice, attacked the rear with vigour, put them to rout, did some execution, and took several prisoners. The French army, as their time of service was now expired, immediately dispersed themselves into their several provinces; and left Henry free to prosecute his advantages against his other enemies.

The nobles of Brittany, instigated by the earl of Chester and Ralph de Fourgeres, were all in arms; but their progress was checked by a body of Brabançons, which the king, after Lewis's retreat, had sent against them. The two armies came to an action near Dol; where the rebels were defeated, fifteen hundred killed on the spot, and the leaders, the earls of Chester and Fougeres, obliged to take shelter

ſhelter in the town of Dol. Henry haſtened to form the ſiege of that place, and carried on the attack with ſuch ardour, that he obliged the governor and garriſon to ſurrender themſelves priſoners. By theſe vigorous meaſures and happy ſucceſſes, the inſurrections were entirely quelled in Britanny; and the king, thus fortunate in all quarters, willingly agreed to a conference with Lewis, in hopes that his enemies, finding all their mighty efforts entirely fruſtrated, would terminate hoſtilities on ſome moderate and reaſonable conditions.

THE two monarchs met between Trie and Giſors; and Henry had here the mortification to ſee his three ſons in the retinue of his mortal enemy. As Lewis had no other pretence for war than ſupporting the claims of the young princes, the king made them ſuch offers as children might be aſhamed to inſiſt on, and could be extorted from him by nothing but his parental affection, or by the preſent neceſſity of his affairs [s]. He inſiſted only on retaining the ſovereign authority in all his dominions; but offered young Henry half the revenues of England, with ſome places of ſurety in that kingdom; or, if he rather choſe to reſide in Normandy, half the revenues of that dutchy, with all thoſe of Anjou. He made a like offer to Richard in Guienne; he promiſed to reſign Britanny to Geoffrey; and if theſe conceſſions were not deemed ſufficient, he agreed to add to them whatever the pope's legates, who were preſent, ſhould require of him [t]. The earl of Leiceſter was alſo preſent at the negotiation; and either from the impetuoſity of his temper, or from a view of abruptly breaking off a conference which muſt cover the allies with confuſion, he gave vent to the moſt violent reproaches againſt Henry, and he even put

[s] Hoveden, p. 539. [t] Ibid. p. 536. Brompton, p. 1088.

his

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his hand to his ſword, as if he meant to attempt ſome violence againſt him. This furious action threw the whole company into confuſion, and put an end to the treaty [u].

THE chief hopes of Henry's enemies ſeemed now to depend on the ſtate of affairs in England, where his authority was expoſed to the moſt imminent danger. One article of prince Henry's agreement with his foreign confederates was, that he ſhould reſign Kent, with Dover, and all its other fortreſſes, into the hands of the earl of Flanders [w]: Yet ſo little national or public ſpirit prevailed among the independent Engliſh nobility, ſo wholly bent were they on the aggrandizement each of himſelf and his own family, that, notwithſtanding this pernicious conceſſion, which muſt have produced the ruin of the kingdom, the greater part of them had conſpired to make an inſurrection, and to ſupport the prince's pretenſions. The king's principal reſource lay in the church and the biſhops, with whom he was now in perfect agreement; whether that the decency of their character made them aſhamed of ſupporting ſo unnatural a rebellion, or that they were entirely ſatisfied with Henry's atonement for the murder of Becket, and for his former invaſion of eccleſiaſtical immunities. That prince, however, had reſigned none of the eſſential rights of his crown in the accommodation; he maintained ſtill the ſame prudent jealouſy of the court of Rome; admitted no legate into England, without his ſwearing to attempt nothing againſt the royal prerogatives; and he had even obliged the monks of Canterbury, who pretended to a free election on the vacancy made by the death of Becket, to chuſe Roger, prior of Dover, in the place of that turbulent prelate [x].

[u] Hoveden, p. 536. [w] Ibid. p. 533. Brompton, p. 1084. Neub. p. 508. [x] Hoveden, p. 537.

THE

THE king of Scotland made an irruption into Northumberland, and committed great devastations; but being opposed by Richard de Lucy, whom Henry had left guardian of the realm, he retreated into his own country, and agreed to a cessation of arms. This truce enabled the guardian to march southward with his army, in order to oppose an invasion, which the earl of Leicester, at the head of a great body of Flemings, had made upon Suffolk. The Flemings had been joined by Hugh Bigod, who made them masters of his castle of Framlingham; and marching into the heart of the kingdom, where they hoped to be supported by Leicester's vassals, they were met by Lucy, who, assisted by Humphry Bohun, the constable, and the earls of Arundel, Glocester, and Cornwal, had advanced to Farnham, with a less numerous, but braver army, to oppose them. The Flemings, who were mostly weavers and artificers (for manufactures were now beginning to be established in Flanders), were broken in an instant, ten thousand of them were put to the sword, the earl of Leicester was taken prisoner, and the remains of the invaders were glad to compound for a safe retreat into their own country.

CHAP. IX. 1173. War with Scotland.

THIS great defeat did not dishearten the malcontents; who, being supported by the alliance of so many foreign princes, and encouraged by the king's own sons, determined to persevere in their enterprise. The earl of Ferrars, Roger de Moubray, Architel de Mallory, Richard de Morreville, Hamo de Mascie, together with many friends of the earls of Leicester and Chester, rose in arms: The fidelity of the earls of Clare and Glocester was suspected; and the guardian, though vigorously supported by Geoffrey bishop of Lincoln, the king's natural son by the fair Rosamond, found it difficult to defend himself on all quarters, from so many open and concealed enemies. The more to augment

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ment the confusion, the king of Scotland, on the expiration of the truce, broke into the northern provinces with a great army [y] of 80,000 men; which, though undisciplined and disorderly, and better fitted for committing devastation, than for executing any military enterprise, was become dangerous from the present factious and turbulent spirit of the kingdom. Henry, who had baffled all his enemies in France, and had put his frontiers in a posture of defence, now found England the seat of danger; and he determined by his presence to overawe the malcontents, or by his conduct and courage to subdue them. He landed at Southampton; and knowing the influence of superstition over the minds of the people, he hastened to Canterbury, in order to make atonement to the ashes of Thomas a Becket, and tender his submissions to a dead enemy. As soon as he came within sight of the church of Canterbury, he dismounted, walked barefoot towards it, prostrated himself before the shrine of the saint, remained in fasting and prayer during a whole day, and watched all night the holy reliques. Not content with this hypocritical devotion towards a man, whose violence and ingratitude had so long disquieted his government, and had been the object of his most inveterate animosity, he submitted to a penance still more singular and humiliating. He assembled a chapter of the monks, disrobed himself before them, put a scourge of discipline into the hands of each, and presented his bare shoulders to the lashes which these ecclesiastics successively inflicted upon him. Next day he received absolution; and departing for London, got soon after the agreeable intelligence of a great victory which his generals had obtained over the Scots, and which being gained, as was reported, on the very day of his absolution, was re-

8th July Penance of Henry for Becket's murder.

[y] Heming. p. 501.

garded

garded as the earneſt of his final reconciliation with Heaven and with Thomas a Becket. CHAP. IX.

WILLIAM king of Scots, though repulſed before the caſtle of Prudhow, and other fortified places, had committed the moſt horrible depredations upon the northern provinces: But on the approach of Ralph de Glanville, the famous juſticiary, ſeconded by Barnard de Baliol, Robert de Stuteville, Odonel de Umfreville, William de Veſci, and other northern barons, together with the gallant biſhop of Lincoln, he thought proper to retreat nearer his own country, and he fixed his camp at Alnwic. He had here weakened his army extremely, by ſending out numerous detachments in order to extend his ravages; and he lay abſolutely ſafe, as he imagined, from any attack of the enemy. But Glanville, informed of his ſituation, made a haſty and fatiguing march to Newcaſtle; and allowing his ſoldiers only a ſmall interval for refreſhment, he immediately ſet out towards evening for Alnwic. He marched that night above thirty miles; arrived in the morning, under cover of a miſt, near the Scottiſh camp; and regardleſs of the great numbers of the enemy, he began the attack with his ſmall but determined body of cavalry. William was living in ſuch ſupine ſecurity, that he took the Engliſh, at firſt, for a body of his own ravagers, who were returning to the camp: But the ſight of their banners convincing him of his miſtake, he entered on the action with no greater body than a hundred horſe, in confidence that the numerous army which ſurrounded him would ſoon haſten to his relief. He was diſmounted on the firſt ſhock, and taken priſoner; while his troops, hearing of this diſaſter, fled on all ſides with the utmoſt precipitation. The diſperſed ravagers made the beſt of their way to their own country; and diſcord ariſing among them, they proceeded even to mutual hoſtilities, and ſuffered more

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13th July.

William king of Scotland defeated and taken priſoner.

CHAP. IX. 1174.

more from each other's ſword, than from that of the enemy.

THIS great and important victory proved at laſt deciſive in favour of Henry, and entirely broke the ſpirit of the Engliſh rebels. The biſhop of Durham, who was preparing to revolt, made his ſubmiſſions; Hugh Bigod, though he had received a ſtrong reinforcement of Flemings, was obliged to ſurrender all his caſtles, and throw himſelf on the king's mercy; no better reſource was left to the earl of Ferrars and Roger de Moubray; the inferior rebels imitating the example, all England was reſtored to tranquillity in a few weeks; and as the king appeared to lie under the immediate protection of Heaven, it was deemed impious any longer to reſiſt him. The clergy exalted anew the merits and powerful interceſſion of Becket; and Henry, inſtead of oppoſing this ſuperſtition, plumed himſelf on the new friendſhip of the ſaint, and propagated an opinion which was ſo favourable to his intereſts [z].

PRINCE Henry, who was ready to embark at Gravelines, with the earl of Flanders and a great army, hearing that his partiſans in England were ſuppreſſed, abandoned all thoughts of the enterpriſe, and joined the camp of Lewis, who, during the abſence of the king, had made an irruption into Normandy, and had laid ſiege to Roüen [a]. The place was defended with great vigour by the inhabitants [b]; and Lewis, deſpairing of ſucceſs by open force, tried to gain the town by a ſtratagem, which, in that ſuperſtitious age, was deemed not very honourable. He proclaimed in his own camp a ceſſation of arms, on pretence of celebrating the feſtival of St. Laurence; and when the citizens, ſuppoſing themſelves in ſafety, were ſo imprudent as to remit their guard, he purpoſed to take advantage

[z] Hoveden, p. 539. [a] Brompton, p. 1096.
[b] Diceto, p. 578.

of

of their ſecurity. Happily, ſome prieſts had, from mere curioſity, mounted a ſteeple, where the alarm-bell hung; and obſerving the French camp in motion, they immediately rang the bell, and gave warning to the inhabitants, who ran to their ſeveral ſtations. The French, who, on hearing the alarm, hurried to the aſſault, had already mounted the walls in ſeveral places; but being repulſed by the enraged citizens, were obliged to retreat with conſiderable loſs [c]. Next day Henry, who had haſtened to the defence of his Norman dominions, paſſed over the bridge in triumph; and entered Roüen in ſight of the French army. The city was now in abſolute ſafety; and the king, in order to brave the French monarch, commanded the gates, which had been walled up, to be opened; and he prepared to puſh his advantages againſt the enemy. Lewis ſaved himſelf from this perilous ſituation by a new piece of deceit not ſo juſtifiable. He propoſed a conference for adjuſting the terms of a general peace, which he knew would be greedily embraced by Henry; and while the king of England truſted to the execution of his promiſe, he made a retreat with his army into France.

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There was, however, a neceſſity on both ſides for an accommodation. Henry could no longer bear to ſee his three ſons in the hands of his enemy; and Lewis dreaded, leſt this great monarch, victorious in all quarters, crowned with glory, and abſolute maſter of his dominions, might take revenge for the many dangers and diſquietudes which the arms, and ſtill more the intrigues of France, had, in his diſputes both with Becket and his ſons, found means to raiſe him. After making a ceſſation of arms, a conference was agreed on near Tours; where Henry granted his ſons much leſs advantageous terms than he had formerly offered; and he received their ſubmiſſions. The moſt ma-

[c] Brompton, p. 1096. Neubrig. p. 411. Heming. p. 503.

terial

CHAP. IX. 1174. The king's accommodation with his sons.

terial of his conceſſions were ſome penſions which he ſtipulated to pay them, and ſome caſtles which he granted them for the place of their reſidence; together with an indemnity for all their adherents, who were reſtored to their eſtates and honours [d].

Of all thoſe who had embraced the cauſe of the young prince, William king of Scotland was the only conſiderable loſer by that invidious and unjuſt enterpriſe. Henry delivered from confinement, without exacting any ranſom, about nine hundred knights whom he had taken priſoners; but it coſt William the ancient independency of his crown as the price of his liberty. He ſtipulated to do homage to Henry for Scotland and all his other poſſeſſions; he engaged that all the barons and nobility of his kingdom ſhould alſo do homage; that the biſhops ſhould take an oath of fealty; that both ſhould ſwear to adhere to the king of England againſt their native prince, if the latter ſhould

1175. 10th Aug.

break his engagements; and that the fortreſſes of Edinburgh, Stirling, Berwic, Roxborough, and Jedborough, ſhould be delivered into Henry's hands, till the performance of articles [e]. This ſevere and humiliating treaty was executed in its full rigour. William, being releaſed, brought up all his barons, prelates, and abbots; and they did homage to Henry in the cathedral of York, and acknowledged him and his ſucceſſors for their ſuperior lord [f]. The Engliſh monarch ſtretched ſtill farther the rigour of the conditions which he exacted. He engaged the king and ſtates of Scotland to make a perpetual ceſſion of the fortreſſes of Berwic, and Roxborough, and to allow the caſtle of Edinburgh

[d] Rymer, vol. i. p. 35. Bened. Abb. p. 88. Hoveden, p. 540. Diceto, p. 583. Brompton, p. 1098. Heming. p. 505. Chron. Dunſt. p. 36.

[e] M. Paris, p. 91. Chron. Dunſt. p. 36. Hoveden, p. 545. M. Weſt. p. 251. Diceto, p. 584. Brompton, p. 1103. Rymer, vol. i. p. 39. Liber Niger Scaccarii, p. 36.

[f] Bened. Abb. p. 113.

to remain in his hands for a limited time. This was the first great ascendant which England obtained over Scotland; and indeed the first important transaction which had passed between the kingdoms. Few princes have been so fortunate as to gain considerable advantages over their weaker neighbours with less violence and injustice than was practised by Henry against the king of Scots, whom he had taken prisoner in battle, and who had wantonly engaged in a war, in which all the neighbours of that prince, and even his own family, were, without provocation, combined against him [g].

CHAP. IX. 1175.

King's equitable administration.

HENRY having thus, contrary to expectation, extricated himself with honour from a situation in which his throne was exposed to great danger, was employed for several years in the administration of justice, in the execution of the laws, and in guarding against those inconveniences, which either the past convulsions of his state, or the political institutions of that age, unavoidably occasioned. The provisions which he made, show such largeness of thought as qualified him for being a legislator; and they were commonly calculated as well for the future as the present happiness of his kingdom.

1176.

HE enacted severe penalties against robbery, murder, false coining, arson; and ordained that these crimes should be punished by the amputation of the right hand and right foot [h]. The pecuniary commutation for crimes, which has a false appearance of lenity, had been gradually disused; and seems to have been entirely abolished by the rigour of these statutes. The superstitious trial by water ordeal, though condemned by the church [i], still sub-

[g] Some Scotch historians pretend, that William paid, besides, 100,000 pounds of ransom, which is quite incredible. The ransom of Richard I. who, besides England, possessed so many rich territories in France, was only 150,000 marks, and yet was levied with great difficulty. Indeed, two-thirds of it only could be paid before his deliverance.

[h] Bened. Abb. p. 132. Hoveden, p. 549.

[i] Seld. Spicileg. ad Eadm. p. 204.

 sisted;

CHAP. IX. 1176. ſiſted; but Henry ordained, that any man accuſed of murder, or any heinous felony, by the oath of the legal knights of the county, ſhould, even though acquitted by the ordeal, be obliged to abjure the realm [k].

All advances towards reaſon and good ſenſe are ſlow and gradual. Henry, though ſenſible of the great abſurdity attending the trial by duel or battle, did not venture to aboliſh it: He only admitted either of the parties to challenge a trial by an aſſize or jury of twelve freeholders [l]. This latter method of trial ſeems to have been very ancient in England, and was fixed by the laws of king Alfred: But the barbarous and violent genius of the age had of late given more credit to the trial by battle, which had become the general method of deciding all important controverſies. It was never aboliſhed by law in England; and there is an inſtance of it ſo late as the reign of Elizabeth: But the inſtitution revived by this king, being found more reaſonable and more ſuitable to a civilized people, gradually prevailed over it.

The partition of England into four diviſions, and the appointment of itinerant juſtices to go the circuit in each diviſion, and to decide the cauſes in the counties, was another important ordinance of this prince, which had a direct tendency to curb the oppreſſive barons, and to protect the inferior gentry and common people in their property [m]. Thoſe juſtices were either prelates or conſiderable noblemen; who, beſides carrying the authority of the king's commiſſion, were able, by the dignity of their own character, to give weight and credit to the laws.

That there might be fewer obſtacles to the execution of juſtice, the king was vigilant in demo-

[k] Bened. Abb. p. 132.
[l] Glanv. lib. ii. cap. 7.
[m] Hoveden, p. 590.

lishing all the new-erected castles of the nobility, in England as well as in his foreign dominions; and he permitted no fortress to remain in the custody of those whom he found reason to suspect [n].

But lest the kingdom should be weakened by this demolition of the fortresses, the king fixed an assize of arms, by which all his subjects were obliged to put themselves in a situation for defending themselves and the realm. Every man possessed of a knight's fee was ordained to have for each fee a coat of mail, a helmet, a shield, and a lance; every free layman, possessed of goods to the value of sixteen marks, was to be armed in like manner; every one that possessed ten marks was obliged to have an iron gorget, a cap of iron, and a lance; all burgesses were to have a cap of iron, a lance, and a wambais; that is, a coat quilted with wool, tow, or such like materials [o]. It appears that archery, for which the English were afterwards so renowned, had not, at this time, become very common among them. The spear was the chief weapon employed in battle.

The clergy and the laity were, during that age, in a strange situation with regard to each other, and such as may seem totally incompatible with a civilized, and indeed with any species of government. If a clergyman were guilty of murder, he could be punished by degradation only: If he were murdered, the murderer was exposed to nothing but excommunication and ecclesiastical censures; and the crime was atoned for by penances and submission [p]. Hence the assassins of Thomas a Becket himself, though guilty of the most atrocious wickedness, and the most repugnant to the sentiments of that age, lived securely in their own houses, without being called to account by Henry himself, who

[n] Bened. Abb. p. 202. Diceto, p. 585.
[o] Bened. Abb. p. 305. Annal. Waverl. p. 161.
[p] Petri Blessen. epist. 73. apud Bibl. Patr. tom. xxiv. p. 992.

 was

CHAP. IX. 1176.

was so much concerned, both in honour and interest, to punish that crime, and who professed, or affected on all occasions, the most extreme abhorrence of it. It was not till they found their presence shunned by every one as excommunicated persons, that they were induced to take a journey to Rome, to throw themselves at the feet of the pontiff, and to submit to the penances imposed upon them: After which, they continued to possess, without molestation, their honours and fortunes, and seem even to have recovered the countenance and good opinion of the public. But as the king, by the constitutions of Clarendon, which he endeavoured still to maintain[q], had subjected the clergy to a trial by the civil magistrate, it seemed but just to give them the protection of that power to which they owed obedience: It was enacted, that the murderers of clergymen should be tried before the justiciary, in the presence of the bishop or his official; and besides the usual punishment for murder, should be subjected to a forfeiture of their estates, and a confiscation of their goods and chattels[r].

The king passed an equitable law, that the goods of a vassal should not be seized for the debt of his lord, unless the vassal be surety for the debt; and that the rents of vassals should be paid to the creditors of the lord, not to the lord himself. It is remarkable that this law was enacted by the king in a council which he held at Verneüil, and which consisted of some prelates and barons of England, as well as some of Normandy, Poictou, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, and Britanny; and the statute took place in all these last-mentioned territories[s],

[q] Chron. Gervase, p. 1433. [r] Diceto, p. 592. Chron. Gervase, p. 1433. [s] Bened. Abb. p. 248. It was usual for the kings of England, after the conquest of Ireland, to summon barons and members of that country to the English parliament. Molineux's Case of Ireland, p. 64, 65, 66.

though

though totally unconnected with each other [t]: A certain proof how irregular the ancient feudal government was, and how near the sovereigns, in some instances, approached to despotism, though in others they seemed scarcely to possess any authority. If a prince much dreaded and revered, like Henry, obtained but the appearance of general consent to an ordinance which was equitable and just, it became immediately an established law, and all his subjects acquiesced in it. If the prince was hated or despised; if the nobles who supported him had small influence; if the humours of the times disposed the people to question the justice of his ordinance; the fullest and most authentic assembly had no authority. Thus all was confusion and disorder; no regular idea of a constitution; force and violence decided every thing.

CHAP. IX. 1176.

THE success which had attended Henry in his wars did not much encourage his neighbours to form any attempt against him; and his transactions with them, during several years, contain little memorable. Scotland remained in that state of feudal subjection to which he had reduced it, and gave him no farther inquietude. He sent over his fourth son, John, into Ireland, with a view of making a more complete conquest of the island; but the petulance and incapacity of this prince, by which he enraged the Irish chieftains, obliged the king soon after to recal him [u]. The king of France had fallen into an abject superstition; and was induced, by a devotion more sincere than that of Henry, to make a pilgrimage to the tomb of Becket, in order to obtain his intercession for the cure of Philip, his eldest son. He probably

[t] Spelman even doubts whether the law were not also extended to England. If it were not, it could only be because Henry did not chuse it; for his authority was greater in that kingdom than in his transmarine dominions.

[u] Bened. Abb. p. 437, &c.

CHAP. IX. 1176. thought himself well entitled to the favour of that saint, on account of their ancient intimacy; and hoped that Becket, whom he had protected while on earth, would not now, when he was so highly exalted in heaven, forget his old friend and benefactor. The monks, sensible that their saint's honour was concerned in the case, failed not to publish that Lewis's prayers were answered, and that the young prince was restored to health by Becket's intercession. That king himself was soon after struck with an apoplexy, which deprived him of his understanding: Philip, though a youth of fifteen, took on him the administration, till his father's death, which happened soon after, opened his way to the throne; and he proved the ablest and greatest monarch that had governed that kingdom since the age of Charlemagne. The superior years, however, and experience of Henry, while they moderated his ambition, gave him such an ascendant over this prince, that no dangerous rivalship, for a long
1180. time, arose between them. The English monarch, instead of taking advantage of his own situation, rather employed his good offices in composing the quarrels which arose in the royal family of France; and he was successful in mediating a reconciliation between Philip and his mother and uncles. These services were but ill requited by Philip, who, when he came to man's estate, fomented all the domestic discords in the royal family of England, and encouraged Henry's sons in their ungrateful and undutiful behaviour towards him.

Prince Henry, equally impatient of obtaining power, and incapable of using it, renewed to the king the demand of his resigning Normandy; and on meeting with a refusal, he fled with his consort to the court of France: But not finding Philip at that time disposed to enter into war for his sake, he accepted of his father's offers of reconciliation, and made

made him submissions. It was a cruel circumstance in the king's fortune, that he could hope for no tranquillity from the criminal enterprises of his sons but by their mutual discord and animosities, which disturbed his family, and threw his state into convulsions. Richard, whom he had made master of Guienne, and who had displayed his valour and military genius by suppressing the revolts of his mutinous barons, refused to obey Henry's orders, in doing homage to his elder brother for that dutchy; and he defended himself against young Henry and Geoffrey, who, uniting their arms, carried war into his territories [u]. The king, with some difficulty, composed this difference; but immediately found his eldest son engaged in conspiracies, and ready to take arms against himself. While the young prince was conducting these criminal intrigues, he was seized with a fever at Martel, a castle near Turenne, to which he had retired in discontent; and seeing the approaches of death, he was at last struck with remorse for his undutiful behaviour towards his father. He sent a message to the king, who was not far distant; expressed his contrition for his faults; and entreated the favour of a visit, that he might at least die with the satisfaction of having obtained his forgiveness. Henry, who had so often experienced the prince's ingratitude and violence, apprehended that his sickness was entirely feigned, and he durst not entrust himself into his son's hands: But when he soon after received intelligence of young Henry's death, and the proofs of his sincere repentance, this good prince was affected with the deepest sorrow; he thrice fainted away; he accused his own hardheartedness in refusing the dying request of his son; and he lamented that he had deprived that prince of

CHAP. IX. 1180.

1183.

11th June. Death of young Henry.

[u] Ypod. Neust. p. 451. Bened. Abb. p. 383. Diceto, p. 617.

CHAP. IX. 1183. the last opportunity of making atonement for his offences, and of pouring out his soul in the bosom of his reconciled father [w]. This prince died in the twenty-eighth year of his age.

THE behaviour of his surviving children did not tend to give the king any consolation for the loss. As prince Henry had left no posterity, Richard was become heir to all his dominions; and the king intended that John, his third surviving son and favourite, should inherit Guienne as his appanage: But Richard refused his consent, fled into that dutchy, and even made preparations for carrying on war, as well against his father as against his brother Geoffrey, who was now put in possession of Britanny. Henry sent for Eleanor his queen, the heiress of Guienne, and required Richard to deliver up to her the dominion of these territories; which that prince, either dreading an insurrection of the Gascons in her favour, or retaining some sense of duty towards her, readily performed; and he peaceably returned to his father's court. No sooner was this quarrel accommodated, than Geoffrey, the most vicious perhaps of all Henry's unhappy family, broke out into violence; demanded Anjou to be annexed to his dominions of Britanny; and on meeting with a refusal, fled to the court of France, and levied forces against his
1185. father [x]. Henry was freed from this danger by his son's death, who was killed in a tournament at Paris [y]. The widow of Geoffrey, soon after his decease, was delivered of a son, who received the name of Arthur, and was invested in the dutchy of Britanny, under the guardianship of his grandfather, who, as duke of Normandy, was also superior lord of that territory. Philip, as lord para-

[w] Bened. Abb. p. 393. Hoveden, p. 621. Trivet, vol. i. p. 84.
[x] Neubrig. p. 422. [y] Bened. Abb. p. 451. Chron. Gervase, p. 1480.

mount, diſputed ſome time his title to this wardſhip; but was obliged to yield to the inclinations of the Bretons, who preferred the government of Henry.

Cruſades.

BUT the rivalſhip between theſe potent princes, and all their inferior intereſt, ſeemed now to have given place to the general paſſion for the relief of the holy Land, and the expulſion of the Saracens. Thoſe infidels, though obliged to yield to the immenſe inundation of Chriſtians in the firſt cruſade, had recovered courage after the torrent was paſt; and attacking on all quarters the ſettlements of the Europeans, had reduced theſe adventurers to great difficulties, and obliged them to apply again for ſuccours from the Weſt. A ſecond cruſade, under the Emperor Conrade, and Lewis VII. king of France, in which there periſhed above 200,000 men, brought them but a temporary relief; and thoſe princes, after loſing ſuch immenſe armies, and ſeeing the flower of their nobility fall by their ſide, returned with little honour into Europe. But theſe repeated misfortunes, which drained the weſtern world of its people and treaſure, were not yet ſufficient to cure men of their paſſion for thoſe ſpiritual adventures; and a new incident rekindled with freſh fury the zeal of the eccleſiaſtics and military adventurers among the Latin Chriſtians. Saladin, a prince of great generoſity, bravery, and conduct, having fixed himſelf on the throne of Egypt, began to extend his conqueſts over the eaſt; and finding the ſettlement of the Chriſtians in Paleſtine an invincible obſtacle to the progreſs of his arms, he bent the whole force of his policy and valour to ſubdue that ſmall and barren, but important territory. Taking advantage of diſſenſions which prevailed among the champions of the croſs, and having ſecretly gained the count of Tripoli, who commanded their armies, he invaded the frontiers with a mighty power; and, aided by the treachery of

that

CHAP. IX. 1187. that count, gained over them at Tiberaide a complete victory, which utterly annihilated the force of the already languishing kingdom of Jerusalem. The holy city itself fell into his hands, after a feeble resistance; the kingdom of Antioch was almost entirely subdued; and except some maritime towns, nothing considerable remained of those boasted conquests, which, near a century before, it had cost the efforts of all Europe to acquire [z].

The western Christians were astonished on receiving this dismal intelligence. Pope Urban III. it is pretended, died of grief; and his successor, Gregory VIII. employed the whole time of his short pontificate in rousing to arms all the Christians who acknowledged his authority. The general cry was, that they were unworthy of enjoying any inheritance in heaven, who did not vindicate from the dominion of the infidels the inheritance of God on earth, and deliver from slavery that country which had been consecrated by the footsteps of their
1188. 21st Jan. Redeemer. William archbishop of Tyre, having procured a conference between Henry and Philip near Gisors, enforced all these topics; gave a pathetic description of the miserable state of the eastern Christians; and employed every argument to excite the ruling passions of the age, superstition, and jealousy of military honour [a]. The two monarchs immediately took the cross; many of their most considerable vassals imitated the example [b]; and as the emperor Frederic I. entered into the same confederacy, some well-grounded hopes of success were entertained; and men flattered themselves, that an enterprise which had failed under the conduct of many independent leaders, or of imprudent princes, might at last, by the efforts of such potent and able monarchs, be brought to a happy issue.

[z] M. Paris, p. 100. [a] Bened. Abb. p. 531.
[b] Neubrig. p. 435. Heming. p. 512.

THE

THE kings of France and England imposed a tax amounting to the tenth of all moveable goods, on such as remained at home[c]; but as they exempted from this burden most of the regular clergy, the secular aspired to the same immunity; pretended that their duty obliged them to assist the crusade with their prayers alone; and it was with some difficulty they were constrained to desist from an opposition, which in them, who had been the chief promoters of those pious enterprises, appeared with the worst grace imaginable[d]. This backwardness of the clergy is perhaps a symptom, that the enthusiastic ardour which had at first seized the people for crusades, was now by time and ill success considerably abated; and that the frenzy was chiefly supported by the military genius and love of glory in the monarchs.

CHAP. IX. 1188.

BUT before this great machine could be put in motion, there were still many obstacles to surmount. Philip, jealous of Henry's power, entered into a private confederacy with young Richard; and, working on his ambitious and impatient temper, persuaded him, instead of supporting and aggrandising that monarchy which he was one day to inherit, to seek present power and independence by disturbing and dismembering it. In order to give a pretence for hostilities between the two kings, Richard broke into the territories of Raymond count of Toulouse, who immediately carried complaints of this violence before the king of France as his superior lord. Philip remonstrated with Henry; but received for answer, that Richard had confessed to the archbishop of Dublin, that his enterprise against Raymond had been undertaken by the approbation of Philip himself, and was conducted by his authority. The king of France, who

1189. Revolt of prince Richard.

c Bened. Abb. p. 498. d Petri Blessen. epist. 112.

might

CHAP. IX. 1189. might have been covered with ſhame and confuſion by this detection, ſtill proſecuted his deſign, and invaded the provinces of Berri and Auvergne, under colour of revenging the quarrel of the count of Toulouſe [e]. Henry retaliated, by making inroads upon the frontiers of France, and burning Dreux. As this war, which deſtroyed all hopes of ſucceſs in the projected cruſade, gave great ſcandal, the two kings held a conference at the accuſtomed place between Giſors and Trie, in order to find means of accommodating their differences: They ſeparated on worſe terms than before; and Philip, to ſhew his diſguſt, ordered a great elm, under which the conferences had uſually been held, to be cut down [f]; as if he had renounced all deſire of accommodation, and was determined to carry the war to extremities againſt the king of England. But his own vaſſals refuſed to ſerve under him in ſo invidious a cauſe [g]; and he was obliged to come anew to a conference with Henry, and to offer terms of peace. Theſe terms were ſuch as entirely opened the eyes of the king of England, and fully convinced him of the perfidy of his ſon, and his ſecret alliance with Philip, of which he had before only entertained ſome ſuſpicion. The King of France required that Richard ſhould be crowned king of England in the lifetime of his father, ſhould be inveſted in all his tranſmarine dominions, and ſhould immediately eſpouſe Alice, Philip's ſiſter, to whom he had formerly been affianced, and who had already been conducted into England [h]. Henry had experienced ſuch fatal effects, both from the crowning of his eldeſt ſon, and from that prince's alliance with the royal family of France, that he rejected theſe terms; and Richard, in conſequence of his ſecret agreement with Philip, immediately revolted

[e] Bened. Abb. p. 508. [f] Ibid. p. 517. 532.
[g] Ibid. p. 519. [h] Bened. Abb. p. 521. Hoveden, p. 652.

from him[i], did homage to the king of France for all the dominions which Henry held of that crown, and received the inveſtitures as if he had already been the lawful poſſeſſor. Several hiſtorians aſſert, that Henry himſelf had become enamoured of young Alice, and mention this as an additional reaſon for his refuſing theſe conditions: But he had ſo many other juſt and equitable motives for his conduct, that it is ſuperfluous to aſſign a cauſe, which the great prudence and advanced age of that monarch render ſomewhat improbable. CHAP. IX 1189.

CARDINAL Albano, the pope's legate, diſpleaſed with theſe increaſing obſtacles to the cruſade, excommunicated Richard, as the chief ſpring of diſcord: But the ſentence of excommunication, which, when it was properly prepared, and was zealouſly ſupported by the clergy, had often great influence in that age, proved entirely ineffectual in the preſent caſe. The chief barons of Poictou, Guienne, Normandy, and Anjou, being attached to the young prince, and finding that he had now received the inveſtiture from their ſuperior lord, declared for him, and made inroads into the territories of ſuch as ſtill adhered to the king. Henry, diſquieted by the daily revolts of his mutinous ſubjects, and dreading ſtill worſe effects from their turbulent diſpoſition, had again recourſe to papal authority; and engaged the cardinal Anagni, who had ſucceeded Albano in the legateſhip, to threaten Philip with laying an interdict on all his dominions. But Philip, who was a prince of great vigour and capacity, deſpiſed the menace, and told Anagni, that it belonged not to the pope to interpoſe in the temporal deſputes of princes, much leſs in thoſe between him and his rebellious vaſſal. He even proceeded ſo far as to reproach him with partiality, and with receiving bribes from the king of England[k]; while

i Brompton, p. 1149. Neubrig. p. 437. Bened. Abb. p. 542. Hoveden, p. 652.

k M. Paris, p. 104.

Richard,

CHAP. IX. 1189.

Richard, ſtill more outrageous, offered to draw his ſword againſt the legate, and was hindred by the interpoſition alone of the company, from committing violence upon him [l].

The king of England was now obliged to defend his dominions by arms, and to engage in a war with France, and with his eldeſt ſon, a prince of great valour, on ſuch diſadvantageous terms. Ferté-Bernard fell firſt into the hands of the enemy: Mans was next taken by aſſault; and Henry, who had thrown himſelf into that place, eſcaped with ſome difficulty [m]: Amboiſe, Chaumont, and Chateau de Loire, opened their gates on the appearance of Philip and Richard: Tours was menaced; and the king, who had retired to Saumur, and had daily inſtances of the cowardice or infidelity of his governors, expected the moſt diſmal iſſue to all his enterpriſes. While he was in this ſtate of deſpondency, the duke of Burgundy, the earl of Flanders, and the archbiſhop of Rheims, interpoſed with their good offices; and the intelligence which he received of the taking of Tours, and which made him fully ſenſible of the deſperate ſituation of his affairs, ſo ſubdued his ſpirit that he ſubmitted to all the rigorous terms which were impoſed upon him. He agreed, that Richard ſhould marry the princeſs Alice; that that prince ſhould receive the homage and oath of fealty of all his ſubjects both in England and his tranſmarine dominions; that he himſelf ſhould pay twenty thouſand marks to the king of France as a compenſation for the charges of the war; that his own barons ſhould engage to make him obſerve this treaty by force, and in caſe of his violating it, ſhould promiſe to join Philip and Richard againſt him; and that all his vaſſals who had en-

l M. Paris, p. 104. m M. Paris, p. 105. Bened. Abb. p. 543. Hoveden, p. 653.

tered into confederacy with Richard, should receive an indemnity for the offence [n]. CHAP. IX. 1189.

But the mortification which Henry, who had been accustomed to give the law in most treaties, received from these disadvantageous terms, was the least that he met with on this occasion. When he demanded a list of those barons to whom he was bound to grant a pardon for their connections with Richard, he was astonished to find at the head of them the name of his second son John [o]; who had always been his favourite, whose interests he had ever anxiously at heart, and who had even, on account of his ascendant over him, often excited the jealousy of Richard [p]. The unhappy father, already overloaded with cares and sorrows, finding his last disappointment in his domestic tenderness, broke out into expressions of the utmost despair, cursed the day in which he received his miserable being, and bestowed on his ungrateful and undutiful children a malediction which he never could be prevailed on to retract [q]. The more his heart was disposed to friendship and affection, the more he resented the barbarous return which his four sons had successively made to his parental care; and this finishing blow, by depriving him of every comfort in life, quite broke his spirit, and threw him into a lingering fever, of which he expired at the castle of Chinon near Saumur. 6th July. Death His natural son Geoffrey, who alone had behaved dutifully towards him, attended his corpse to the nunnery of Fontervrault; where it lay in state in the abbey-church. Next day Richard, who came to visit the dead body of his father, and who, notwithstanding his criminal conduct, was not wholly destitute of generosity, was struck with horror and remorse at the sight; and as the attendants observed, that at that very instant, blood gush-

[n] M. Paris, p. 106. Bened. Abb. p. 543. Hoveden, p 653.
[o] Hoveden, p. 654.
[p] Bened. Abb. p. 541.
[q] Hoveden, p. 654.

ed

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ed from the mouth and noſtrils of the corpſe[r], he exclaimed, agreeably to a vulgar ſuperſtition, that he was his father's murderer; and he expreſſed a deep ſenſe, though too late, of that undutiful behaviour which had brought his parent to an untimely grave[s].

and character of Henry.

THUS died, in the fifty-eighth year of his age, and thirty-fifth of his reign, the greateſt prince of his time for wiſdom, virtue, and abilities, and the moſt powerful in extent of dominion of all thoſe that had ever filled the throne of England. His character, in private as well as in public life, is almoſt without a blemiſh; and he ſeems to have poſſeſſed every accompliſhment, both of body and mind, which makes a man either eſtimable or amiable. He was of a middle ſtature, ſtrong and well proportioned; his countenance was lively and engaging; his converſation affable and entertaining; his elocution eaſy, perſuaſive, and ever at command. He loved peace, but poſſeſſed both bravery and conduct in war; was provident without timidity; ſevere in the execution of juſtice without rigour; and temperate without auſterity. He preſerved health, and kept himſelf from corpulency, to which he was ſomewhat inclined, by an abſtemious diet, and by frequent exerciſe, particularly hunting. When he could enjoy leiſure, he recreated himſelf either in learned converſation or in reading; and he cultivated his natural talents by ſtudy, above any prince of his time. His affections, as well as his enmities, were warm and durable; and his long experience of the ingratitude and infidelity of men never deſtroyed the natural ſenſibility of his temper, which diſpoſed him to friendſhip and ſociety. His character has been tranſmitted to us by ſeveral writers who were his contemporaries[t]; and it ex-

[r] Bened. Abb. p. 547. Brompton, p. 1151. [s] M. Paris, p. 107. [t] Petri Bleſ. epiſt. 46, 47. in Bibliotheca Patrum, vol. xxiv. p. 985, 986, &c. Girald. Camb. p. 783, &c.

tremely

tremely resembles, in its most remarkable features, that of his maternal grandfather Henry I.: Excepting only, that ambition, which was a ruling passion in both, found not in the first Henry such unexceptionable measures of exerting itself, and pushed that prince into measures, which were both criminal in themselves, and were the cause of farther crimes, from which his grandson's conduct was happily exempted.

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Miscellaneous transactions of this reign.

THIS prince, like most of his predecessors of the Norman line, except Stephen, passed more of his time on the continent than in this island: He was surrounded with the English gentry and nobility, when abroad: The French gentry and nobility attended him when he resided in England: Both nations acted in the government as if they were the same people; and, on many occasions, the legislatures seem not to have been distinguished. As the king and all the English barons were of French extraction, the manners of that people acquired the ascendant, and were regarded as the models of imitation. All foreign improvements, therefore, such as they were, in literature and politeness, in laws and arts, seem now to have been, in a good measure, transplanted into England; and that kingdom was become little inferior in all the fashionable accomplishments, to any of its neighbours on the continent. The more homely but more sensible manners and principles of the Saxons, were exchanged for the affectations of chivalry and the subtilties of school philosophy: The feudal ideas of civil government, the Romish sentiments in religion, had taken entire possession of the people: By the former, the sense of submission towards princes was somewhat diminished in the barons; by the latter, the devoted attachment to papal authority was much augmented among the clergy. The Norman and other foreign families established in England, had now struck deep root; and being entirely incorporated

CHAP. IX. 1189. with the people, whom at firſt they oppreſſed and deſpiſed, they no longer thought that they needed the protection of the crown for the enjoyment of their poſſeſſions, or conſidered their tenure as precarious. They aſpired to the ſame liberty and independence which they ſaw enjoyed by their brethren on the continent, and deſired to reſtrain thoſe exorbitant prerogatives and arbitrary practices, which the neceſſities of war and the violence of conqueſt had at firſt obliged them to indulge in their monarch. That memory alſo of a more equal government under the Saxon princes, which remained with the Engliſh, diffuſed ſtill farther the ſpirit of liberty, and made the barons both deſirous of more independence to themſelves, and willing to indulge it to the people. And it was not long ere this ſecret revolution in the ſentiments of men produced, firſt violent convulſions in the ſtate, then an evident alteration in the maxims of government.

The hiſtory of all the preceding kings of England ſince the conqueſt, gives evident proofs of the diſorders attending the feudal inſtitutions; the licentiouſneſs of the barons, their ſpirit of rebellion againſt the prince and laws, and of animoſity againſt each other: The conduct of the barons in the tranſmarine dominions of thoſe monarchs, afforded perhaps ſtill more flagrant inſtances of theſe convulſions; and the hiſtory of France, during ſeveral ages, conſiſts almoſt entirely of narrations of this nature. The cities, during the continuance of this violent government, could neither be very numerous nor populous; and there occur inſtances which ſeem to evince, that, though theſe are always the firſt ſeat of law and liberty, their police was in general looſe and irregular, and expoſed to the ſame diſorders with thoſe by which the country was generally infeſted. It was a cuſtom in London for great numbers, to the amount of a hundred or more, the ſons and relations of conſiderable citizens,

to form themſelves into a licentious confederacy, to break into rich houſes and plunder them, to rob and murder the paſſengers, and to commit with impunity all ſorts of diſorder. By theſe crimes, it had become ſo dangerous to walk the ſtreets by night, that the citizens durſt no more venture abroad after ſun-ſet, than if they had been expoſed to the incurſions of a public enemy. The brother of the earl of Ferrars had been murdered by ſome of thoſe nocturnal rioters; and the death of ſo eminent a perſon, which was much more regarded than that of many thouſands of an inferior ſtation, ſo provoked the king, that he ſwore vengeance againſt the criminals, and became thenceforth more rigorous in the execution of the Laws [u].

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THERE is another inſtance given by hiſtorians, which proves to what a height ſuch riots had proceeded, and how open theſe criminals were in committing their robberies. A band of them had attacked the houſe of a rich citizen, with an intention of plundering it; had broken through a ſtone-wall with hammers and wedges; and had already entered the houſe ſword in hand; when the citizen, armed cap-a-pee, and ſupported by his faithful ſervants, appeared in the paſſage to oppoſe them: He cut off the right hand of the firſt robber that entered; and made ſuch ſtout reſiſtance, that his neighbours had leiſure to aſſemble, and come to his relief. The man who loſt his hand was taken; and was tempted by the promiſe of pardon to reveal his confederates; among whom was one John Senex, eſteemed among the richeſt and beſt-born citizens in London. He was convicted by the ordeal; and though he offered five hundred marks for his life, the king refuſed the money, and ordered him to be hanged [w]. It appears from a ſtatute of Edward I. that theſe diſorders were not remedied even in that

[u] Bened. Abb. p. 196.

[w] Bened. Abb. p. 197, 198.

reign.

CHAP. IX. 1189. reign. It was then made penal to go out at night after the hour of the curfew, to carry a weapon, or to walk without a light or lanthorn [x]. It is ſaid in the preamble to this law, that, both by night and by day, there were continual frays in the ſtreets of London.

HENRY's care in adminiſtering juſtice had gained him ſo great a reputation, that even foreign and diſtant princes made him arbiter, and ſubmitted their differences to his judgment. Sanchez king of Navarre, having ſome controverſies with Alfonſo king of Caſtile, was contented, though Alfonſo had married the daughter of Henry, to chuſe this prince for a referee; and they agreed, each of them to conſign three caſtles into neutral hands, as a pledge of their not departing from his award. Henry made the cauſe be examined before his great council, and gave a ſentence, which was ſubmitted to by both parties. Theſe two Spaniſh kings ſent each a ſtout champion to the court of England, in order to defend his cauſe by arms, in caſe the way of duel had been choſen by Henry [y].

HENRY ſo far aboliſhed the barbarous and abſurd practice of confiſcating ſhips which had been wrecked on the coaſt, that he ordained, if one man or animal were alive in the ſhip, that the veſſel and goods ſhould be reſtored to the owners [z].

THE reign of Henry was remarkable alſo for an innovation which was afterwards carried farther by his ſucceſſors, and was attended with the moſt important conſequences. This prince was diſguſted with the ſpecies of military force which was eſtabliſhed by the feudal inſtitutions, and which, though it was extremely burdenſome to the ſubject, yet rendered very little ſervice to the ſovereign. The barons, or military tenants, came late into the field;

[x] Obſervations on the ancient Statutes, p. 216. [y] Rymer, vol. iv. p. 43. Bened. Abb. p. 172. Diceto, p. 597. Brompton, p. 1120. [z] Rymer, vol. i. p. 36.

they

they were obliged to ſerve only forty days; they were unſkilful and diſorderly in all their operations; and they were apt to carry into the camp the ſame refractory and independent ſpirit, to which they were accuſtomed in their civil government. Henry, therefore, introduced the practice of making a commutation of their military ſervice for money; and he levied ſcutages from his baronies and knights fees, inſtead of requiring the perſonal attendance of his vaſſals. There is mention made, in the hiſtory of the exchequer, of theſe ſcutages in his ſecond, fifth, and eighteenth year [a]; and other writers give us an account of three more of them [b]. When the prince had thus obtained money, he made a contract with ſome of thoſe adventurers in which Europe at that time abounded: They found him ſoldiers of the ſame character with themſelves, who were bound to ſerve for a ſtipulated time: The armies were leſs numerous, but more uſeful, than when compoſed of all the military vaſſals of the crown: The feudal inſtitutions began to relax: The kings became rapacious for money, on which all their power depended: The barons, ſeeing no end of exactions, ſought to defend their property: And as the ſame cauſes had nearly the ſame effects in the different countries of Europe, the ſeveral crowns either loſt or acquired authority, according to their different ſucceſs in the conteſt.

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THIS prince was alſo the firſt that levied a tax on the moveables or perſonal eſtates of his ſubjects, nobles as well as commons. Their zeal for the holy wars made them ſubmit to this innovation; and a precedent being once obtained, this taxation became, in following reigns, the uſual method of ſupplying the neceſſities of the crown. The tax of Danegelt, ſo generally odious to the nation, was remitted in this reign.

[a] Madox, p. 435, 436, 437, 438. from the records. [b] Tyrrel, vol. ii. p. 466.

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It was a usual practice of the kings of England, to repeat the ceremony of their coronation thrice every year, on assembling the states at the three great festivals. Henry, after the first years of his reign, never renewed this ceremony, which was found to be very expensive and very useless. None of his successors revived it. It is considered as a great act of grace in this prince, that he mitigated the rigour of the forest laws, and punished any transgressions of them, not capitally, but by fines, imprisonments, and other more moderate penalties.

Since we are here collecting some detached incidents, which show the genius of the age, and which could not so well enter into the body of our history, it may not be improper to mention the quarrel between Roger archbishop of York, and Richard archbishop of Canterbury. We may judge of the violence of military men and laymen, when ecclesiastics could proceed to such extremities. Cardinal Haguezun being sent, in 1176, as legate into Britain, summoned an assembly of the clergy at London; and as both the archbishops pretended to sit on his right hand, this question of precedency begat a controversy between them. The monks and retainers of archbishop Richard fell upon Roger, in the presence of the cardinal and of the synod, threw him to the ground, trampled him under foot, and so bruised him with blows, that he was taken up half dead, and his life was, with difficulty, saved from their violence. The archbishop of Canterbury was obliged to pay a large sum of money to the legate, in order to suppress all complaints with regard to this enormity [c].

We are told by Gyraldus Cambrensis, that the monks and prior of St. Swithun threw themselves, one day, prostrate on the ground and in the mire before Henry, complaining, with many tears and

[c] Bened. Abb. p. 138, 139. Brompton, p. 1109. Chron. Gerv. p. 1433. Neubrig. p. 413.

much

much doleful lamentation, that the bishop of Winchester, who was also their abbot, had cut off three dishes from their table. How many has he left you? said the king. Ten only, replied the disconsolate monks. I myself, exclaimed the king, never have more than three; and I enjoin your bishop to reduce you to the same number [d].

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THIS king left only two legitimate sons, Richard who succeeded him, and John who inherited no territory, though his father had often intended to leave him a part of his extensive dominions. He was thence commonly denominated *Lackland*. Henry left three legitimate daughters; Maud, born in 1156, and married to Henry duke of Saxony; Eleanor, born in 1162, and married to Alphonso king of Castile; Joan, born in 1165, and married to William king of Sicily [e].

HENRY is said by ancient historians to have been of a very amorous disposition: They mention two of his natural sons by Rosamond, daughter of lord Clifford; namely, Richard Longespée, or Longsword (so called from the sword he usually wore), who was afterwards married to Ela, the daughter and heir of the earl of Salisbury; and Geoffrey, first bishop of Lincoln, then archbishop of York. All the other circumstances of the story, commonly told of that lady, seem to be fabulous.

[d] Gir. Camb. cap. 5. in Anglia Sacra, vol. ii. [e] Diceto, p. 616.

NOTES

TO THE

FIRST VOLUME.

NOTE [A], p. 13.

THIS queſtion has been diſputed with as great zeal, and even acrimony, between the Scotch and Iriſh antiquaries, as if the honour of their reſpective countries were the moſt deeply concerned in the deciſion. We ſhall not enter into any detail on ſo unintereſting a ſubject; but ſhall propoſe our opinion in a few words. It appears more than probable, from the ſimilitude of language and manners, that Britain either was originally peopled, or was ſubdued, by the migration of inhabitants from Gaul, and Ireland from Britain: The poſition of the ſeveral countries is an additional reaſon that favours this concluſion. It appears alſo probable, that the migrations of that colony of Gauls or Celts, who peopled or ſubdued Ireland, was originally made from the north-weſt parts of Britain; and this conjecture (if it do not merit a higher name) is founded both on the Iriſh language, which is a very different dialect from the Welſh, and from the language anciently ſpoken in South Britain, and on the vicinity of Lancaſhire, Cumberland, Galloway, and Argyleſhire, to that Iſland. Theſe events, as they paſſed long before the age of hiſtory and records, muſt be known by reaſoning alone, which in this caſe ſeems to be pretty ſatisfactory: Cæſar and Tacitus, not to mention a multitude of other Greek and Roman authors, were guided by like inferences. But beſides theſe primitive facts, which lie in a very remote antiquity, it is a matter of poſitive and undoubted teſtimony, that the Roman province of Britain, during the time of the lower empire, was much infeſted by bands of robbers or pirates, whom the provin-

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cial Britons called Scots or Scuits; a name which was probably uſed as a term of reproach, and which theſe banditti themſelves did not acknowledge or aſſume. We may infer from two paſſages in Claudian, and from one in Oroſius, and another in Iſidore, that the chief ſeat of theſe Scots was in Ireland. That ſome part of the Iriſh freebooters migrated back to the north-weſt parts of Britain, whence their anceſtors had probably been derived in a more remote age, is poſitively aſſerted by Bede, and implied in Gildas. I grant, that neither Bede nor Gildas are Cæſars or Tacituſes; but ſuch as they are, they remain the ſole teſtimony on the ſubject, and therefore muſt be relied on for want of better: Happily, the frivolouſneſs of the queſtion correſponds to the weakneſs of the authorities. Not to mention, that, if any part of the traditional hiſtory of a barbarous people can be relied on, it is the genealogy of nations, and even ſometimes that of families. It is in vain to argue againſt theſe facts from the ſuppoſed warlike diſpoſition of the Highlanders, and unwarlike of the ancient Iriſh. Thoſe arguments are ſtill much weaker than the authorities. Nations change very quickly in theſe particulars. The Britons were unable to reſiſt the Picts and Scots, and invited over the Saxons for their defence, who repelled thoſe invaders: Yet the ſame Britons valiantly reſiſted, for 150 years, not only this victorious band of Saxons, but infinite numbers more, who poured in upon them from all quarters. Robert Bruce in 1322, made a peace, in which England, after many defeats, was conſtrained to acknowledge the independence of his country: Yet in no more diſtant period than ten years after, Scotland was totally ſubdued by a ſmall handful of Engliſh, led by a few private noblemen. All hiſtory is full of ſuch events. The Iriſh Scots, in the courſe of two or three centuries, might find time and opportunities ſufficient to ſettle in North Britain, though we can neither aſſign the period nor cauſes of that revolution. Their barbarous manner of life rendered them much fitter than the Romans for ſubduing theſe mountaineers. And, in a word, it is clear, from the language of the two countries, that the Highlanders and the Iriſh are the ſame people, and that the one are a colony from the other. We have poſitive evidence, which, though from neutral perſons, is not perhaps the beſt that may be wiſhed for, that the former, in the third or fourth century, ſprang from the latter: We

have

have no evidence at all that the latter ſprang from the former. I ſhall add, that the name of Erſe or Iriſh, given by the low country Scots to the language of the Scotch Highlanders, is a certain proof of the traditional opinion delivered from father to ſon, that the latter people came originally from Ireland.

NOTE [B], p. 117.

THERE is a ſeeming contradiction in ancient hiſtorians with regard to ſome circumſtances in the ſtory of Edwy and Elgiva. It is agreed, that this prince had a violent paſſion for his ſecond or third couſin, Elgiva, whom he married, though within the degrees prohibited by the canons. It is alſo agreed, that he was dragged from a lady on the day of his coronation, and that the lady was afterwards treated with the ſingular barbarity above mentioned. The only difference is, that Oſborne and ſome others call her his ſtrumpet, not his wife, as ſhe is ſaid to be by Malmeſbury. But this difference is eaſily reconciled: For if Edwy married her contrary to the canons, the monks would be ſure to deny her to be his wife, and would inſiſt that ſhe could be nothing but his ſtrumpet: So that, on the whole, we may eſteem this repreſentation of the matter as certain; at leaſt, as by far the moſt probable. If Edwy had only kept a miſtreſs, it is well known, that there are methods of accommodation with the church, which would have prevented the clergy from proceeding to ſuch extremities againſt him: But his marriage, contrary to the canons, was an inſult on their authority, and called for their higheſt reſentment.

NOTE [C], p. 118.

MANY of the Engliſh hiſtorians make Edgar's ſhips amount to an extravagant number, to 3000, or 3600: See Hoveden, p. 426. Flor. Wigorn. p. 607. Abbas Rieval, p. 360. Brompton, p. 869, ſays, that Edgar had 4000 veſſels. How can theſe accounts be reconciled to probability, and to the ſtate of the navy in the time of Alfred? W. Thorne makes the whole number amount only to 300, which is more probable. The fleet of

of Ethelred, Edgar's ſon, muſt have been ſhort of 1000 ſhips; yet the Saxon Chronicle, p. 137, ſays, it was the greateſt navy that ever had been ſeen in England.

NOTE [D], p. 141.

ALMOST all the ancient hiſtorians ſpeak of this maſſacre of the Danes as if it had been univerſal, and as if every individual of that nation throughout England had been put to death. But the Danes were almoſt the ſole inhabitants in the kingdoms of Northumberland and Eaſt Anglia, and were very numerous in Mercia. This repreſentation, therefore, of the matter is abſolutely impoſſible. Great reſiſtance muſt have been made, and violent wars enſued; which was not the caſe. This account given by Wallingford, though he ſtands ſingle, muſt be admitted as the only true one. We are told, that the name *Lurdane*, *lord Dane*, for an idle lazy fellow, who lives at other people's expence, came from the conduct of the Danes, who were put to death. But the Engliſh princes had been entirely maſters for ſeveral generations; and only ſupported a military corps of that nation. It ſeems probable, therefore, that it was theſe Danes only that were put to death.

NOTE [E], p. 167.

THE ingenious author of the article GODWIN, in the Biographia Britannica, has endeavoured to clear the memory of that nobleman, upon the ſuppoſition, that all the Engliſh annals had been falſified by the Norman hiſtorians after the conqueſt. But that this ſuppoſition has not much foundation, appears hence, that almoſt all theſe hiſtorians have given a very good character of his ſon Harold, whom it was much more the Intereſt of the Norman cauſe to blacken.

NOTE [F], p. 178.

THE whole ſtory of the tranſactions between Edward, Harold, and the duke of Normandy, is told ſo differently by the ancient writers, that there are few important paſſages

paſſages of the Engliſh hiſtory liable to ſo great uncertainty. I have followed the account which appeared to me the moſt conſiſtent and probable. It does not ſeem likely, that Edward ever executed a will in the duke's favour, much leſs that he got it ratified by the ſtates of the kingdom, as is affirmed by ſome. The will would have been known to all, and would have been produced by the Conqueror, to whom it gave ſo plauſible, and really ſo juſt a title; but the doubtful and ambiguous manner in which he ſeems always to have mentioned it, proves that he could only plead the known intentions of that monarch in his favour, which he was deſirous to call a will. There is indeed a charter of the Conqueror preſerved by Dr. Hickes, vol. i. where he calls himſelf *rex hereditarius*, meaning heir by will; but a prince, poſſeſſed of ſo much power, and attended with ſo much ſucceſs, may employ what pretence he pleaſes: It is ſufficient to refute his pretences to obſerve, that there is a great difference and variation among hiſtorians, with regard to a point which, had it been real, muſt have been agreed upon by all of them.

Again, ſome hiſtorians, particularly Malmeſbury and Matthew of Weſtminſter, affirm that Harold had no intention of going over to Normandy, but that taking the air in a pleaſure-boat on the coaſt, he was driven over by ſtreſs of weather to the territories of Guy count of Ponthieu: But beſides that this ſtory is not probable in itſelf, and is contradicted by moſt of the ancient hiſtorians, it is contradicted by a very curious and authentic monument lately diſcovered. It is a tapeſtry, preſerved in the ducal palace of Roüen, and ſuppoſed to have been wrought by orders of Matilda, wife to the emperor: At leaſt it is of very great antiquity. Harold is there repreſented as taking his departure from king Edward in execution of ſome commiſſion, and mounting his veſſel with a great train. The deſign of redeeming his brother and nephew, who were hoſtages, is the moſt likely cauſe that can be aſſigned; and is accordingly mentioned by Eadmer, Hoveden, Brompton, and Simeon of Durham. For a farther account of this piece of tapeſtry, ſee Hiſtoire de l'Academie de Literature, tom. ix. page 535.

NOTE [G], p. 201.

IT appears from the ancient tranſlations of the Saxon annals and laws, and from king Alfred's tranſlation of Bede, as well as from all the ancient hiſtorians, that *comes* in Latin, *alderman* in Saxon, and *earl* in Dano-Saxon, were quite ſynonimous. There is only a clauſe in a law of king Athelſtan's (ſee Spelm. Conc. p. 406.) which has ſtumbled ſome antiquaries, and has made them imagine that an earl was ſuperior to an alderman. The weregild, or the price of an earl's blood, is there fixed at 15,000 thrimſas, equal to that of an archbiſhop; whereas that of a biſhop and alderman is only 8000 thrimſas. To ſolve this difficulty we muſt have recourſe to Selden's conjecture (ſee his Titles of Honour, chap. v. p. 603, 604.), that the term of earl was in the age of Athelſtan juſt beginning to be in uſe in England, and ſtood at that time for the atheling or prince of the blood, heir to the crown. This he confirms by a law of Canute, § 55. where an atheling and an archbiſhop are put upon the ſame footing. In another law of the ſame Athelſtan the weregild of the prince or atheling is ſaid to be 15,000 thrimſas. See Wikins, p. 71. He is therefore the ſame who is called earl in the former law.

NOTE [H], p. 252.

THERE is a paper or record of the family of Sharneborne, which pretends, that that family, which was Saxon, was reſtored upon proving their innocence, as well as other Saxon families which were in the ſame ſituation. Though this paper was able to impoſe on ſuch great antiquaries as Spelman (ſee Gloſſ. in verbo *Drenges*) and Dugdale (ſee Baron. vol. i. p. 118.), it is proved by Dr. Brady (ſee Anſw. to Petyt, p. 11, 12.) to have been a forgery; and is allowed as ſuch by Tyrrel, though a pertinacious defender of his party notions (ſee his Hiſt. vol. ii. introd. p. 51. 73.). Ingulf, p. 70. tells us, that very early Hereward, though abſent during the time of the conqueſt, was turned out of all his eſtate, and could not obtain redreſs. William even plundered the monaſteries. Flor.

Flor. Wigorn. p. 636. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 48. M. Paris, p. 5. Sim. Dun. p. 200. Diceto, p. 482. Brompton, p. 967. Knyghton, p. 2344. Alur. Beverl. p. 130. We are told by Ingulf, that Ivo de Taillebois plundered the monaſtery of Croyland of a great part of its land, and no redreſs could be obtained.

NOTE [I], p. 253.

THE obliging of all the inhabitants to put out the fires and lights at certain hours, upon the ſounding of a bell, called the *courfeu*, is repreſented by Polydore Virgil, lib. 9. as a mark of the ſervitude of the Engliſh. But this was a law of police, which William had previouſly eſtabliſhed in Normandy. See du Moulin, Hiſt. de Normandie, p. 160. The ſame law had place in Scotland. LL. Burgor. cap. 86.

NOTE [K], p. 260.

WHAT theſe laws were of Edward the Confeſſor, which the Engliſh, every reign during a century and a half, deſire ſo paſſionately to have reſtored, is much diſputed by antiquaries, and our ignorance of them ſeems one of the greateſt defects in the ancient Engliſh hiſtory. The collection of laws in Wilkins, which paſs under the name of Edward, are plainly a poſterior and an ignorant compilation. Thoſe to be found in Ingulf are genuine; but ſo imperfect, and contain ſo few clauſes favourable to the ſubject, that we ſee no great reaſon for their contending for them ſo vehemently. It is probable, that the Engliſh meant the *common law*, as it prevailed during the reign of Edward; which we may conjecture to have been more indulgent to liberty than the Norman inſtitutions. The moſt material articles of it were afterwards comprehended in Magna Charta.

NOTE [L], p. 284.

INGULF, p. 70. H. Hunt. p. 370. 372. M. Weſt. p. 225. Gul. Neub. p. 357. Alured. Beverl. p. 124. De Geſt. Angl. p. 333. M. Paris, p. 4. Sim. Dun. p. 206.

p. 206. Brompton. p. 962. 980. 1161. Gervase Tilb. lib. i. cap. 16. Textus Roffensis apud Seld. Spicileg. ad Eadm. p. 179. Gul. Pict. p. 206. Ordericus Vitalis, p. 521. 666. 853. Epist. St. Thom. p. 801. Gul. Malmes. p. 52. 57. Knyghton, p. 2354. Eadmer, p. 110. Thom. Rudborne in Ang. Sacra, vol. i. p. 248. Monach. Roff. in Ang. Sacra, vol. ii. p. 276. Girald. Camb. in eadem, vol. ii. p. 413. Hist. Elyensis, p. 516. The words of this last historian, who is very ancient, are remarkable, and worth transcribing: *Rex itaque factus Willielmus, quid in principes Anglorum, qui tantæ cladi superesse poterant, fecerit, dicere, cum nihil prosit, omitto. Quid enim prodesset, si nec unum in toto regno de illis dicerem pristina potestate uti permissum, sed omnes aut in gravem paupertatis ærumnam detrusos, aut exhæredatos, patria pulsos, aut effossis oculis, vel cæteris amputatis membris, opprobrium hominum factos, aut certe miserrime afflictos, vita privatos. Simili modo utilitate carere existimo dicere quid in minorem populum, non solum ab eo, sed a suis actum sit, cum id dictu sciamus difficile, et ob immanem crudelitatem fortassis incredibile.*

NOTE [M], p. 340.

HENRY, by the feudal customs, was entitled to levy a tax for the marrying of his eldest daughter, and he exacted three shillings a hyde on all England. H. Hunt. p. 379. Some historians (Brady, p. 270. and Tyrrel, vol. ii. p. 182.) heedlessly make this sum amount to above 800,000 pounds of our present money: But it could not exceed 135,000. Five hydes, sometimes less, made a knight's fee, of which there were about 60,000 in England, consequently near 300,000 hydes; and at the rate of three shillings a hyde, the sum would amount to 45,000 pounds, or 135,000 of our present money. See Rudborne, p. 257. In the Saxon times, there were only computed 243,600 hydes in England.

NOTE [N], p. 344.

THE legates *a latere*, as they were called, were a kind of delegates, who possessed the full power of the pope in all the provinces committed to their charge, and were very busy in extending as well as exercising it. They nominated

minated to all vacant benefices, aſſembled ſynods, and were anxious to maintain eccleſiaſtical privileges, which never could be fully protected without encroachments on the civil power. If there were the leaſt concurrence or oppoſition, it was always ſuppoſed that the civil power was to give way: Every deed, which had the leaſt pretence of holding of any thing ſpiritual, as marriages, teſtaments, promiſſory oaths, were brought into the ſpiritual court, and could not be canvaſſed before a civil magiſtrate. Theſe were the eſtabliſhed laws of the church; and where a legate was ſent immediately from Rome, he was ſure to maintain the papal claims with the utmoſt rigour: But it was an advantage to the king to have the archbiſhop of Canterbury appointed legate, becauſe the connections of that prelate with the kingdom tended to moderate his meaſures.

NOTE [O], p. 377.

WILLIAM of Newbridge, p. 383, (who is copied by later hiſtorians), aſſerts, that Geoffrey had ſome title to the counties of Maine and Anjou. He pretends that count Geoffrey, his father, had left him theſe dominions by a ſecret will, and had ordered that his body ſhould not be buried, till Henry ſhould ſwear to the obſervance of it, which he, ignorant of the contents, was induced to do. But beſides that this ſtory is not very likely in itſelf, and ſavours of monkiſh fiction, it is found in no other ancient writer, and is contradicted by ſome of them, particularly the monk of Marmoutier, who had better opportunities than Newbridge of knowing the truth. See Vita Gauf. Duc. Norman. p. 103.

NOTE [P], p. 380.

THE ſum ſcarcely appears credible; as it would amount to much above half the rent of the whole land. Gervaſe is indeed a contemporary author; but churchmen are often guilty of ſtrange miſtakes of that nature, and are commonly but little acquainted with the public revenues. This ſum would make 540,000 pounds of our preſent money. The Norman Chronicle, p. 995. ſays, that Henry raiſed only 60 Angevin ſhillings on each knight's fee in his foreign dominions: This is only a fourth of the ſum which

which Gervafe fays he levied on England: An inequality no wife probable. A nation may by degrees be brought to bear a tax of 15 fhillings in the pound, but a fudden and precarious tax can never be impofed to that amount, without a very vifible neceffity, efpecially in an age fo little accuftomed to taxes. In the fucceeding reign the rent of a knight's fee was computed at four pounds a year. There were 60,000 knights fees in England.

NOTE [Q], p. 382.

FITZ-STEPHENS, p. 18. This conduct appears violent and arbitrary; but was fuitable to the ftrain of adminiftration in thofe days. His father, Geoffrey, though reprefented as a mild prince, fet him an example of much greater violence. When Geoffrey was mafter of Normandy, the chapter of fees prefumed, without his confent, to proceed to the election of a bifhop; upon which he ordered all of them, with the bifhop elect, to be caftrated, and made all their tefticles be brought him in a platter. Fitz-Steph. p. 44. In the war of Touloufe, Henry laid a heavy and an arbitrary tax on all the churches within his dominions. See Epift. St. Thom. p. 232.

NOTE [R,] p. 397.

I FOLLOW here the narrative of Fitz-Stephens, who was fecretary to Becket; though, no doubt, he may be fufpected of partiality towards his patron. Lord Lyttelton chufes to follow the authority of a manufcript letter, or rather manifefto, of Folliot, bifhop of London, which is addreffed to Becket himfelf, at the time when the bifhop appealed to the pope from the excommunication pronounced againft him by his primate. My reafons, why I give the preference to Fitz-Stephens, are, (1.) If the friendfhip of Fitz-Stephens might render him partial to Becket, even after the death of that prelate, the declared enmity of the bifhop muft, during his lifetime, have rendered him more partial on the other fide. (2.) The bifhop was moved by intereft, as well as enmity, to calumniate Becket. He had himfelf to defend againft the fentence of excommunication, dreadful to all, efpecially to a prelate: And no more effectual means than to throw all the blame

on

on his adverſary. (3.) He has actually been guilty of palpable calumnies in that letter. Among theſe, I reckon the following: He affirms, that, when Becket ſubſcribed the Conſtitutions of Clarendon, he ſaid plainly to all the biſhops of England, *It is my maſter's pleaſure that I ſhould forſwear myſelf, and at preſent I ſubmit to it, and do reſolve to incur a perjury, and repent afterwards as I may.* However barbarous the times, and however negligent zealous churchmen were then of morality, theſe are not words which a primate of great ſenſe, and of much ſeeming ſanctity, would employ in an aſſembly of his ſuffragans: He might act upon theſe principles, but never ſurely would publickly avow them. Folliot alſo ſays, that all the biſhops were reſolved obſtinately to oppoſe the Conſtitutions of Clarendon, but the primate himſelf betrayed them from timidity, and led the way to their ſubſcribing. This is contrary to the teſtimony of all the hiſtorians, and directly contrary to Becket's character, who ſurely was not deſtitute either of courage or of zeal for eccleſiaſtical immunities. (4.) The violence and injuſtice of Henry, aſcribed to him by Fitz-Stephens, is of a piece with the reſt of the proſecution. Nothing could be more iniquitous, than, after two years ſilence, to make a ſudden and unprepared demand upon Becket to the amount of 44,000 marks (equal to a ſum of near a million in our time), and not allow him the leaſt interval to bring in his accounts. If the king was ſo palpably oppreſſive in one article, he may be preſumed to be equally ſo in the reſt. (5.) Though Folliot's letter, or rather manifeſto, be addreſſed to Becket himſelf, it does not acquire more authority on that account. We know not what anſwer was made by Becket: The collection of letters cannot be ſuppoſed quite complete. But that the collection was not made by one (whoever he were) very partial to that primate, appears from the tenor of them, where there are many paſſages very little favourable to him: Inſomuch that the editor of them at Bruſſels, a Jeſuit, thought proper to publiſh them with great omiſſions, particularly of this letter of Folliot's. Perhaps Becket made no anſwer at all, as not deigning to write to an excommunicated perſon, whoſe very commerce would contaminate him; and the biſhop, truſting to this arrogance of his primate, might calumniate him the more freely. (6.) Though the ſentence pronounced on Becket by the great council implies that he had refuſed to make any anſwer to the king's court, this does not fortify the

narrative

narrative of Folliot: For if his excuſe was rejected as falſe and frivolous, it would be treated as no anſwer. Becket ſubmitted ſo far to the ſentence of confiſcation of goods and chattels, that he gave ſurety, which is a proof that he meant not at that time to queſtion the authority of the king's courts. (7.) It may be worth obſerving, that both the author of Hiſtoria quadrapartita, and Gervaſe, contemporary writers, agree with Fitz-Stephens; and the latter is not uſually very partial to Becket. All the ancient hiſtorians give the ſame account.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASVATI MAHAL.